A CATHEDRAL PILGRIMAGE

BY JULIA C. R. DORR





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A CATHEDRAL PILGRIMAGE





THE GALILEE, DURHAM CATHEDRAL

A

CATHEDRAL PILGRIMAGE

BY

JULIA C. R. DORR

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF ENGLAND'S FACE," ETC., ETC.

BOSTON

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To many minds both profound and cultured, to many natures that are both sensitive and appreciative, the English cathedrals make no special appeal. It is largely a matter of temperament. There are others to whom they have so much to say that it is overpowering. For them every stone has a voice, every aisle a message. The great, sombre towers bring them strength and healing ; the soaring spires lift them above earth and its weariness into an atmosphere where all is peace.

Destiny has forbidden to many such as these — true cathedral lovers — the delight of personal knowledge and intimacy. To bring to them the very faintest echo of this voice, this message, this breath of strength and healing and peace, is the sole object of this little book.

J. C. R. D.

The Maples, Rutland, Vt.,
May 11, 1896.

A CATHEDRAL PILGRIMAGE

I

TO KING INA'S WELLE AND THE ISLE OF AVALON

"BUT where are all the people?" said Altera. "That's what puzzles me."

It puzzled me also, as I think it must puzzle all Americans who see much of rural England. Our ancestral home is so very small when compared with the broad domain of Columbia, that it is not strange if the sons and daughters of the latter regard England somewhat in the light of the old woman who lived in her shoe and did not know how to dispose of her numerous progeny. It had seemed to us, at least, as if in England we should always be conscious, if not of a crowd, yet of the nearness of other people. But it was just the contrary. The

villages swarm, the towns are crowded; yet the country proper seemed to us less densely populated than our own New England. In our somewhat leisurely course through the Western counties, from Wales to the Isle of Wight, this was one of the things that most impressed us. Often we would ride for miles through wide stretches of fertile country, with farmhouses and cottages dotting all the way, and see hardly a living soul in the fields, or on the highways, at work, or at play. This is not because the railway avoids the thoroughfares. We were constantly running along beside the level, hedge-inclosed roads, so fair and inviting; but so seldom did we see either riders, or pedestrians, that the highways seemed to be made, and kept in such fine condition, for ornament rather than for use. Perhaps the fact that "Little Lord Fauntleroy's" grandfather, the grouty Earl of Dorincourt, is by no means the only gentleman in England who lives "a long way

from his gate," may help to solve this problem. Enormous private estates are, doubtless, not conducive to dense population; and the vast parks that cover so many thousands of British acres, beautiful as they are, it must still be confessed are like the lilies of the field that neither toil nor spin. They are not bread-and-butter earners. Yet if beauty is its own best excuse, who shall quarrel with them for that? A lily has as good a right to live as a wheat-blade.

If the highways are attractive, what shall be said of the little, well-worn footpaths running hither and thither across the fields? There is nothing lovelier in all England, nothing more enticing, than these little byways. Wandering here and there, apparently at their own wild will — branching off here, skirting or climbing a hill there, now bending to follow the course of the brook, now flying off at a tangent and disappearing behind a hedge — no doubt each seemingly purposeless curve has its own reason

for being, and has ministered to the needs of generation after generation. For they are no creatures of a day, these English footpaths that are so stimulating to the imagination. They are permanent features of the landscape, as the hills are and the streams; and they look as if they might have been trodden for ages. They tell stories; they sing songs; they weep, and laugh, and pray. They have grown human through their long association with mankind.

"You have propounded one riddle this morning," I said to Altera. "Now it is my turn. What becomes of all the rubbish?"

The question related to the country. There is rubbish enough in the towns, Heaven knows! But as soon as you get out of them, you begin to wonder what becomes of all the *débris* that elsewhere follows in the wake of human existence. Wherever we go in our own land, the way

is strewn with wrecks and ruins. What becomes, over here, of all the old tin cans, the old hoops, the broken crockery, the empty bottles, the thousand and one things that cannot be burned, and that have no inclination to dissolve themselves into their original elements? All rural England is swept and brushed and dusted, as it were, suiting one's housewifely instincts to a charm. There is literally no refuse, no litter. What becomes of it all? Is the island so small that its good genii can reach from sea to sea, and toss all that is unsightly and unmanageable into the healing, hiding waves?

I have said we seldom saw any one at work, or at play. Yet England was doing her haying. Somebody had cut, or was cutting, the grass that filled the air with its rare fragrance all the way from Conway to Ventnor. Twice or thrice we saw Maud Muller, picturesque, and pretty as a pink, in gown of blue or rose-coloured cotton and

wide straw hat. Much oftener we saw her mother — a good deal less comely, if the truth must be told, and much busier. English Maud did not seem to be pining after any "might have beens," or to be conscious of importunate longings. Tossing the fragrant hay in the sweet, fresh air and golden sunshine, with father, brother, and perhaps lover, to share the work, was not so bad a thing. Verily, the hayfield has some advantages over the kitchen and the laundry.

One summer afternoon we left Bristol for a land of faery, a world of dreams, a region of enchantment. We should have been transported thither by the touch of some magic wand, or have been wafted through the air on rosy clouds. At the very least, we should have been borne on by milk-white steeds, in a chariot radiant with purple and gold. But, alas! we had to go by rail, poor, common mortals that we were. Taking the Cheddar Valley line, which leaves the Bristol & Exeter at Yat-

on, we swept down through the beautiful vale that lies at the foot of the Mendip Hills. All the way the scenery was most charmingly varied. The Hills themselves, lying at our left, were rocky as to their summits, but well cultivated on the slopes. Farmhouses gray with age, cottages rose-wreathed and ivy-clad, dotted all the way; and every few miles brought us to a village, with its "Hall," or mansion, its parish church, — generally standing a little apart, embosomed in trees, with the dead of many generations sleeping peacefully in its shadow, — and the pretty rectory hard by. The air was full of peace and contentment. Green pastures came up close to the railway track, and the very sheep and cattle looked drowsily comfortable, scarcely pricking up their ears, or whisking their tails, as the fiery monster whizzed past them. Even the dogs seemed less alert and nervous than our own. It was almost too much trouble to bark.

"Altera," I said, "the outside is all so fair. What do you suppose the inside is? Can it be possible that misery, squalor, and — sin — lurk underneath the ivies and roses? I must see the inside of some of these picturesque thatched cottages before I die."

"Better not take too near a view," she answered, "for sin and dirt lurk everywhere on earth. Let us take the good the gods provide, and not be too inquisitive."

Which is undoubtedly a comfortable rule for travellers to follow. But, without looking closely, or asking deep questions, one would say England — rural England — was a pretty good place to be poor in.

At length we were in Wells; and Wells is faeryland. We entered in broad daylight, in most prosaic fashion. But from the first hour of our stay to the last, the magical influences of the quaint old city held us spellbound. Just wherein the

charm lies it is somewhat hard to say. We laughed at ourselves at the time — or tried to. We made fun of our emotions; we called ourselves sentimental; we ridiculed our rhapsodies, and yielded under a protest. We told each other it was only because Wells was the second cathedral town in which we had really stayed; and that, to be sure, the Cathedral itself was finer than dear old Chester; but that, when we had seen Salisbury, with its soaring spire, and Winchester, which is English history embodied in stone, the majestic splendour of Canterbury, the magnificence of Ely and Lincoln and York, and the fortress-like grandeur of "time-honoured Durham," then we should undoubtedly laugh more than ever at our innocent infatuation in being so "carried away" with Wells. But, having seen and studied them all, and many another besides, we were never untrue to our first love; we never ceased to feel the sweet thraldom of the inexplicable

charm that makes Wells among the most lovable of English cathedrals, and clothes the unpretending little town in a veil of mysticism and romance.

But to go back to the beginning. We went to the Swan Hotel, which is as old as the hills, or older. One would think it must be as old as the town, anyhow. Five hundred years ago it was a famous hostelry, and it still continues so. It is just opposite the Cathedral, to which it has its own private path and gateway — a fact on which the old inn plumes itself not a little. To tell the honest truth, one learns after a while that modern conveniences are more to be desired in a hotel than a perceptible flavour of antiquity. But the Swan has made use of her white wings to sail along on the tide of progress, and she is fairly well up with the times. Alas! she gave us stones when we asked for bread, as did most of the West of England inns — the so-called "cottage loaf," which they chiefly affect,

being an utter abomination. Barring this, however, she made us very comfortable. Having taken possession of our rooms, which overlooked the Cathedral close, we cast one glance at the magnificent façade and — ordered dinner! Thus closely do romance and reality tread upon each other's heels. It may, however, be some excuse for us to say that, by yielding thus early to reality in the shape of chops and peas, we secured the long, cool, late afternoon and dewy twilight, for our first enchanted wandering in the wonder-world of Wells.

After a while we went through the tiny flower garden, with its baby fountain, and entered the "strait gate" leading into the close. Before us, across the wide green stretch of turf bordered by stately trees, rose the mighty towers, gray with the touch of the centuries, looming darkly against the blue of the sky, and the grand west front, with its tier on tier of sculptured figures, reaching from the basement

to the uppermost height of the great central gable. Did I say that Winchester was English history embodied? We hear and read less of Wells; but on that mighty page of stone, the west front of Wells Cathedral, is written the history of the world, from the creation downward. There are its crowned kings, its heroes, its warriors, its holy women of whom the world was not worthy. There are saints without number. There are "the goodly fellowship of the prophets," "the noble army of martyrs," "the glorious company of the Apostles." There are seraphim and cherubim — a very glory of angels — and, high over all, once sat the Christ enthroned in majesty. Of this glorious figure, then the centre and climax of the whole, only the feet now remain. But the story is easily read. It is this: "To Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein;" and "The holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee."



WELLS CATHEDRAL

There are three hundred of these figures, many of them of life size, some battered and mutilated by vandal hordes, and all worn by the slow, disintegrating touch of time; crude and grotesque at the best in many instances, and yet impressive and imposing beyond description. Of them, as a whole, Freeman says, — "The sculptures of the west front of Wells are superior to any of the same period in any part of Europe." On the north tower is the "Last Supper," a sculptural group said to be the earliest known representation of the scene; two and a half centuries older than the great picture of Leonardo da Vinci. Many of the canopied niches are empty. Perhaps the very emptiness speaks more forcibly than the best attempt at restoration. At all events, no such attempt has been made. Canopies and broken niches have been made whole, but not a lost statue has been replaced.

How long we stood silent and overawed be-

fore that majestic company I will not undertake to say. Then we went in at the low west door — the double door in the middle. On each side is a single door opening into the aisle. Low and narrow the three certainly are, in proportion to the size of the front; but their smallness is said to have a symbolic meaning — "Enter ye in at the strait gate."

It was growing dark in the aisles, and shadows lurked in the far spaces, while the nave itself, and the lofty vaulted roof, were radiant with the sunset light streaming in through the triple lancets of the great west window. Radiant is hardly the word. They were filled with a splendid gloom that was more glorious than day.

But we hardly looked about us. This was the time for out-of-door delights. As we wrote our names in the visitors' book, and talked with the verger, making our arrangements for the morrow, he

said: "You have heard of our famous old clock? Come with me. It is about to strike." Into the north transept he led us, and pointed us to a bench. Down we sat and waited, a trifle amused, if the truth must be told, at the incongruousness of it all; that, after our high, rapturous fancies, the first thing we should take special heed of in the grand Cathedral should be a queer old clock!

But it was worth seeing. After saying that it was made by a monk of Glastonbury in 1325, or thereabouts, let me quote from a local authority. Never having made a special study of timepieces, I dare not trust my memory: "The face shows the hour of the day, the age of the moon, and the position of the planets. Above the dial-plate, which is six feet six inches in diameter, is a platform around a panelled tower. On this are four mounted figures, equipped as for a tournament, which, as the clock proclaims the hour, start into

action, and hurry rapidly round. The quarters are struck by a sitting figure, which uses its heels for the purpose."

Outside, near the north porch, is the clock face where two figures in armour, locally called the "quarter Jacks," strike the quarters. At the dissolution of the Abbey the clock was carried to Wells. On it the ingenious maker in the early part of the fourteenth century inscribed his name — "*Petrus Lightfoot, monachus, fecit hoc opus.*" Curious and interesting as it is, it seems somewhat out of keeping with the solemn splendour of its surroundings; and, with all due reverence for the good monk Peter, we wished it had been put somewhere else.

As we came out we fell again under the spell of the magnificent façade. So, too, apparently, had fallen "a woman of the people," who, with a child in her arms, Madonna-wise, stood gazing up seriously at the stony faces. Gradually she

grew nearer and nearer, looking at us from under the light shawl that was drawn about her head, as if seeking a certain spiritual sympathy. "Surely," thought I, "we are all akin, we women;" and I was about to make some sympathetic observation, when, giving her arms a little toss to settle the child more steadily on its perch, she remarked: "It's awful old-fashioned, now ain't it, mum?"

The beauty of that place and hour is something that cannot be put into words. The Cathedral close, or green, as it is sometimes called to distinguish it from the Vicar's close on the north, is entered by three noble gateways, all built by Bishop Thomas de Beckynton in the fifteenth century, and all bearing his arms and his rebus—a flaming beacon issuing from a tun or barrel. One of these gateways opens from the market-place, and is called "The Penniless Porch," but I could not learn why it was thus impecunious.

Another, on the opposite corner of the close, is known as Brown's Gate, and the third, or Chain Gate, spans the Bath road and connects the Vicar's close with the Cathedral. To the south lie the great cloisters, forming three sides of a quadrangle, the fourth side of which is formed by the whole length of the nave. The space inclosed is the Palm churchyard, so named from the yew-tree in its centre, branches of which were used formerly in processions in lieu of real palm boughs. The east cloister serves as a passage from the Cathedral to the Bishop's Palace, which, with its bastioned walls, its moat, and its drawbridge, lies still further to the south.

Thitherward we strayed in the soft sunset light, over the cool green velvet of the turf, and under the long arcades formed by the drooping branches of the lime-trees. Were we living and moving in a dream? Not a human being was in sight as we seated ourselves on the green bank of the

moat and looked about us. It was a *real* moat, wide, and filled to the brim with living, sparkling water — the only one we saw in England that had not long ago run dry ; and on its surface, like that of a still, deep river, stately swans and a flock of white ducks were idly floating. Over it hung the drawbridge, bound fast, but not with chains. Nature has taken possession of it, and wound about it her ivies, her climbing vines, and clinging mosses, and bidden them make of turreted tower, and groined vault, and high portcullis, sweet, sheltered nooks wherein birds might build their nests. No warder blew his horn, no mailed knight in panoply of steel rode forth with clash of spear and shield to startle them. There was no harsher sound than the low sighing of the wind and now and again the sweet chiming of cathedral bells.

The Bishop's Palace at Wells is said to be the finest in the Kingdom. It was built in the thirteenth century by Bishop Jace-

line; but the external fortifications, consisting of the walls, bastions, and moat, were the work of Bishop Ralph, of Shrewsbury, a full century later; but they were undoubtedly a part of Bishop Jaceline's original design, forming, with the Cathedral, chapter-house, and close, a "magnificent conception, giving an idea of the grandeur of the Middle Ages hardly to be obtained elsewhere."

A fortified palace for an ambassador of the Prince of Peace seems strangely at variance with modern ideas. But so does all other mediæval life; and the sword and spear were as potent, and perhaps as needful, accessories of civilization and Christianity, in those days, as was the Bible itself. We cannot judge of the past by the present.

At length we roused as from a dream, crossed the drawbridge, knocked at the heavy door, and — waited. Do you think it swung open after the fashion of commonplace, ordinary-world doors? By no man-

ner of means! One of the panels slid back after dignified, decorous delay, and the blooming face of a very young girl appeared at the opening.

"May we come in?" we asked, and she smilingly bade us enter.

How beautiful it was — the picture that met our eyes as we strayed onward through that wide expanse of park and garden combined! Our young guide could not give us much information, but that mattered little. The place told its own story. Here were the ruins, magnificent in their decay, of Bishop Burnell's great Banqueting Hall, built in the thirteenth century, and destroyed in the fifteenth, after a life of less than two hundred years. It was the largest hall of its kind in all England — a superb structure one hundred and twenty feet long and seventy feet broad, lighted by nine lofty windows. At each angle were octagonal turrets containing the staircases. These are still standing; and four

of the beautiful windows may yet be seen through swaying curtains of ivy.

Across the wide stretch of lawn is the exquisite little chapel, only fifty-two feet by twenty-six, in which my Lord Bishop has family prayers, and in which the students of the theological school meet for daily services.

We meant to see the palace itself, for our little maid assured us that the housekeeper was a friend of her own, and would gladly show us its glories. But the grounds were so charming, the walks along the moat were so enticing, the whole world of out-of-doors was so altogether lovely, that we dallied too long. The result was that all we saw of the inside of the episcopal residence was the vaulted lower story, with its pillars of Purbeck marble, which is now used as a dining-room. Of this we only caught a glimpse by peeping through a window; not surreptitiously, however, even to save time; but tempted and incited thereto by our

small guide, who assured us it was quite the proper thing to do.

But no words can describe the enchantment of it all — the great sweep of velvet turf, the blooming flowers, the stately trees, the splendid ruins, the ivy-mantled bastions, the perfect beauty of the palace, the fair terrace, the little grotto and arbour in which tradition says Bishop Ken, the brave and saintly, wrote his morning hymn and whither he used to repair at daybreak with his lute; the encircling moat, the sweet, bubbling, gurgling springs, or "wells," by which it is fed, and from which the city takes its name; and, dominating over all, the mighty walls and massive towers of the gray Cathedral. It was worth crossing the sea for.

The next morning we sallied forth for a further glimpse of the town, and in search of a silversmith. Wells is but a little place, the population being considerably less than eight thousand. Like many

other cathedral towns, or cities, — in England only the cathedral towns *are* cities, — it is hardly more than a cluster of streets and houses that has grown up around, and to answer the needs of, its great centre and *raison d'être*. Its beginnings are lost in a cloud of myths and fables, running back to the year 166. But it has been a place of importance ever since the reign of Ina, king of the West Saxons, who built a church here in 704.

From the market-place radiate several crooked streets, down one of which we wandered. The first thing that especially attracted our attention were the rills of very clear water running along the streets close to the sidewalk. "Where does all this water come from?" we asked; "and does it always run after this fashion?"

We were speedily answered; for every man, woman, and child knew the story. It seems that in 1443, or thereabouts, Bishop Thomas de Beckynton built for

the citizens of Wells the great conduit in the market-place, and supplied it with water from St. Andrew's spring, sometimes called the Well of King Ina, in the palace gardens. In fact, prior to the time of Edward the Confessor the town itself was known as Wells. In his will the good Bishop, who probably had advanced ideas as to the advantages of cleanliness, ordained that the surplus water, or overflow, should run through the streets forever, "by night and by day." The citizens are quite proud of this clause, as they have good reason to be. I don't know how many times we were told the water was to run "by night and by day." The gift had one other condition; namely, that on each anniversary of the donor's death, the mayor, citizens, and burgesses of Wells should visit his tomb in the Cathedral, "and there pray for his soul and the souls of all the faithful deceased." At first sight it might seem to the uninitiated as if the souls of

the *un*faithful deceased were most in need of being prayed for; but no doubt the good Bishop knew best. Whether he did or no, the will has never been "broken," and the holy rite it prescribed has been performed, annually, for four centuries and a half.

But to return to our chief errand. Is it to be supposed that messieurs the silversmiths had their shops open at the unearthly hour of half-past nine in the morning? Not they! "It is too early, mum," said a frowzy-haired woman who, with her bare arms wrapped in her apron and two unkempt children clinging to her skirts, stood just outside the door, literally filling the narrow sidewalk. The floors of the houses were on a level with the street, having no doorsteps, and hardly so much as a threshold. "It is too early, mum; the shops won't be open till ten, or maybe half-past."

There was a dilemma! But though it

might be early for shopkeepers, it was not too early for a group of four wandering minstrels, beplumed, betinselled, and bedizened generally, with two violins, a tambourine, and a triangle, to gather a crowd about them. The whole narrow street swarmed with men, women, and children. We watched the curious, motley crowd for a few minutes, thinking how strangely foreign the whole scene was, and then brought ourselves back to business.

"We can't wait here all day," I said. "I wonder where the shopkeeper lives. Can you tell me?" I asked of my frowzy friend, who was serenely gazing at us and at the musicians, alternately.

"Right next you, at your left, and where the little green door is, mum," she answered. "Perhaps you might knock 'im up, mum."

Which we proceeded to do; and succeeded at last in unearthing him from a little back alley, which we reached through a long,

narrow passageway where half a dozen children, all of an age, apparently, were playing. Some of them followed us into the shop where I made my purchase, and then we retraced our steps cathedralward, with the serene consciousness of duty well performed.

On our way we passed the Church of St. Cuthbert. It is beautiful externally; but, true to the rule we had established of trying to get clear, strong impressions of a few things, rather than mere glimpses of many, we did not go in.

This paper, especially as to the next few paragraphs, is not written for learned folk, nor for those who have been all over the world and seen all there is to see. But there are those who have never been so happy as to see the old-world cathedrals, and who long to form some slight idea of them, who yet say, "Pictures and descriptions are all Greek to me. I do not know what I am trying to see. If I

study the ground plans, even, I lose my bearings."

Let me say for their consolation that many who *have* seen them say the same thing. "I was all astray in their vast spaces," said a scholarly woman, and a good church-woman, too. "It was like being in a wilderness. I could not tell the points of compass, and was so bewildered I hardly knew right from left."

Without being aware of it, she held in her hand the key to the whole difficulty. She did not know the points of compass. When you enter a cathedral, no matter by what entrance, go straight down to the west door, and stand there till you get your bearings.

"But how shall I know the west door? The cathedrals are many-sided; and there is no end to the doors and porches, to say nothing of the chapels and all that sort of thing. How am I to know which way is west?"

Come with me to the west front of Wells,

and let us see if we cannot solve this problem once for all. We will not puzzle ourselves with styles of architecture. For the nonce, we will not know Norman from Early English, nor Decorated from Perpendicular. We will only try to learn where we are, and how to find our way about — if we can.

Place yourself with your back to the massive door. Above your head are the triple lancets of the great west window. The middle light represents the beheading of John the Baptist, and was brought to Wells by Dean Creyghton on his return from fifteen years of exile with Charles II. Do not waste time in a study of it, however, for it is not very good. Look before you, rather. What do you see? First, the glorious beauty of the nave, with its nine piers — clusters of reed-like shafts in groups of three, the capitals enriched with exquisite carvings of bird and leaf and flower, with now and then a grotesque

figure, or a curious device, that seems ironical in its significance. Above the pier arches runs the deep triforium, with its slender columns of Purbeck marble, extending back over the side aisles. Up, up, up, springing lightly from the arches of the triforium, soars the lofty vaulted roof. Between each of the bays of the triple vaulting shafts opens a clerestory window. Do not stir from your place, but, having cast this one quick glance around and above you, look straight ahead. Directly in front of you, down the length of the nave, rises the choir screen, with the organ above it, seen through the strange inverted arch that is one of the chief peculiarities, and the chief defect, of Wells. It, with the screen and organ, obscures the vista, and in a measure destroys the perspective; but as it was built to strengthen the towers in 1338, we must not grumble. Yet look again, and — much as the view is obstructed — through the opening of the upper arch you will

catch glimpses far beyond of the roofs of the exquisite choir and Lady-Chapel, and the richly coloured light of the furthermost *eastern* window.

The point for a novice to remember, therefore, is this. In every cathedral, the altar, the sanctuary, beyond which the Lady-Chapel usually lies, is at the east. Starting from it, you would go down through the choir, be it large or small, through the junction of the transepts with the nave, and then on down the length of the nave itself to the west door.

"I never can tell which transept I am in, the north, or the south," said one bewildered sight-seer.

Bear in mind, then, that if you are facing the altar, or the choir, the south transept is always at your right, the north always at your left. With this point firmly fixed in the mind once for all, that the altar is invariably at the east, bringing the south transept to the right, and the north to the

left, of one who faces it (or who stands at the west door), and there is no danger of getting bewildered, or astray, even in the vast spaces of Westminster or Canterbury. For, with all their diversity of ornament, with all their blossoming out into chapels and chantries and lesser transepts and shrines innumerable, the cathedrals are all built on the same general plan — a Latin or Greek cross, of which the main transepts are the arms. There are one or two small exceptions, Manchester for instance, but they only prove the rule.

Another point. To rush through a cathedral with a motley crowd of tourists, at the heels of a verger, is — not to see it. It is a mere mockery, a feast of Barmecide. You see nothing but the surface of things, and you do not half see even that. Go with the verger on the prescribed round in the first place, looking neither at plan nor guide-book. Listen attentively to what he says, perfunctory as it may seem. You

will be sure to learn something of the very poorest; while of the best, as intelligent and courteous teachers, hardly too much can be said. But, having done this, get permission to go over the place again at your leisure and alone. We were told this could not be done, that such permission would not be granted. We asked it everywhere, and it was never refused, not even in stately Canterbury, which has the reputation of being the most unapproachable of all. Much depends on the mental attitude of the visitor. If the official in charge, be he dean, or canon, or verger, sees that he is really interested and reverent, he will, metaphorically speaking, give him the keys and bid him Godspeed. Then it is that the true joy of the explorer begins. It was in this way that we saw Wells.

Let us go back a moment to the west door for another look at the nave. In the central bay on the south, on a level with the clerestory, and not projecting beyond

the triforium, is a small inclosed space, which Murray calls the music gallery. I wonder if I can be mistaken in thinking that our guide gave it the far more suggestive and poetic title of the *watching* gallery, where the priests were wont to keep holy vigil in commemoration of the night wherein One said, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?"

But we must not linger here, beguiled by the beautiful chantries, nor in the transepts, rich as they are in whatever appeals to the heart or the imagination. Only pausing for a moment to look at the curious Norman font, let us go up a flight of two or three steps into the choir. The decorated screen does not detain us long; but no words can fitly portray the beauty that breaks upon our delighted eyes as we pass beyond it. The choir itself is a marvel of loveliness, with its light, slender shafts of polished Purbeck marble supporting the canopied stalls of carven stone, its

fine pulpit, the Bishop's throne, the three graceful arches at the east, the seven long niches above, that seem to uphold the lofty window, and all the wealth of architectural detail that beggars description. The reredos, or screen behind the altar, is low, and does not obstruct the view into the retro-choir and Lady-Chapel beyond. Over it we look into a maze of almost supernatural glory; group after group of lofty fan-traceried columns, like stately palm-trees springing of their own glad free will to support the fine vaulting of the roof; shafts and arches and lancet-shaped vistas in infinite variety opening in all directions between the clustered pillars; monumental shrines, with canopies of stone so delicately carved that they seem like frostwork, or like finest lace; and over all the rich spendours of the stained glass, the blaze of many-coloured light pouring in through the eastern windows.

The Lady-Chapel, which is octagonal,

and gives an apsidal or semicircular form to the end of the church, is yet quite distinct from it, and is a most perfect and unique little building — a veritable gem.

Turning reluctantly away, let us go back to the north transept, from which a grand staircase, lighted by fine traceried windows, leads up to the chapter-house, which we enter through a double door of extraordinary beauty. This, too, is octagonal, with a central column of sixteen shafts, which is like nothing in the world but a great palm-tree supporting the grandly vaulted roof. Below the eight magnificent windows runs an arcade with Purbeck shafts, encircling the room. There, under fine canopies, are the stone seats of the monks. Verily, our brethren of the thirteenth century, who were wont to convene here to discuss all vast affairs, whether secular or religious, had a fair place of meeting.

Beyond the chapter-house the great.

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staircase ascends through another fine doorway to the gallery over the chain-gate which connects the Vicar's close with the Cathedral. It is now used as a library; but through it the vicars can pass from their own close to the church, thus avoiding the fierce winds that gave to the north-west angle of the green the name of "Kill Canon Corner."

The undercroft, or crypt, which, contrary to usual custom, is on a level with the transept, lies below the chapter-house. It likewise carries on the octagonal idea, and has its own grand central column. Near the entrance door — a beautiful specimen of mediæval ironwork — are stone coffins emptied long ago of even the ashes of their former occupants. Not a vestige of them remains, not even a name or a memory; yet here, with scarcely an inkling of decay, lie the insensate stones to whose keeping they were committed with prayers and chantings and stately ceremonies long

centuries ago. Leaning against the wall are effigies of priests and bishops; and scattered about in the dim, sepulchral light are curious relics of the past — an ancient cope chest, a chalice taken from a tomb, specimens of carving and ornaments from dismantled shrines. Suspended from one of the arches is a great wooden lantern that once lighted the ways of the monks of Glastonbury. But let us leave the ghastly place. Daylight is better.

Have we seen enough? Let us linger a moment longer to note the exquisite finish of the details, and to see how, even in remote and almost inaccessible passages, every boss and corbel and capital is as finely wrought as in the nave itself.

"In the elder days of art
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the gods see everywhere."

So wrought the builders of Wells.

Having seen all this, we have seen noth

ing. And if we had, the seeing is the very least of it. It is not the beauty of Wells only, nor its sublimity merely, that thrills one. It is the story that it tells, the mighty tale that is written on every stone and carved on every lofty capital. The effigies on the tombs are often grotesque. But the man is to be pitied who can think of that, when he stands over the dust and sees the sculptured image, in his very habit as he lived, of the man who in the year 1000 preached in the little church that was the parent of this great Cathedral and stood upon this very ground.

It has been said, "But what have Americans, especially American Protestants, to do with these things? They are at war with our principles, at variance with our ideas. We will none of them!"

Nevertheless, they belong to us as well as to England. They are a part of our inheritance. They have, in a greater or less degree, coloured and moulded our intellectual

and spiritual forces, as well as those of our friends beyond the sea. Shall we forget that in those strange, mysterious Middle Ages during which these miracles in stone, these stupendous creations of human genius, grew and blossomed, there were no Protestants? We may call ourselves what we will to-day. We may split ourselves into as many sects as there are sands in the sea. But when these grand cathedrals sprang into life and being, with all their accessories and ramifications of hospitals, almshouses, schools, and colleges, the world was divided into just two vast armies — Heathendom and Christendom; and abbot and bishop, priest and vicar, were mail-clad knights fighting the battles of the latter. Let us not be too quick to disclaim our kinship with them.

From Wells we went still further into dreamland. We went to Glastonbury, only six miles distant. It might have been six thousand; for Glastonbury is the "In-

sula Avallonia" of the Romans, the "Avalon," or "Apple-tree Isle," of the early Britons, the "mystic Isle of Avalon," the "Island-valley of Avilion," that has so often been the theme of story and of song. It was like going into another world, a world of dreams and legends, where truth and fiction are so interwoven that the separate threads cannot be distinguished. William of Malmsbury wrote in 1126 the marvellous history of the even then famous Abbey. According to him, Joseph of Arimathea, in the year of our Lord 66, came to Avalon, and, being admonished thereto by the angel Gabriel, built a church in honour of the Blessed Virgin. Hither he bore the Holy Grail, clothed, like Excalibur, "in white samite, mystic, wonderful," and here, according to tradition, it abode awhile. To give even an abstract of the Malmsbury legends is out of the question here. Suffice it to say that one grain of genuine wheat has been sifted out of the mass of chaff.

It is certain that under the Romans, or the Britons, in the very infancy of Christianity, somebody built here a chapel, or oratory, the walls of which, it is quaintly said, were of "osiers wattled together all round," and that, under the name of "Vetusta Ecclesia," it was venerated as the first Christian Church in Britain. This low wattled structure grew in time to be one of the richest and most magnificent abbeys in England.

The afternoon sun was still high when we alighted at a queer old hostlery, with a fine façade, called, nowadays, "The George." Once it was known as "Ye Pilgrim's Inn." Here, in the fifteenth century, — which seems so very modern as compared with the first, and its story of Joseph of Arimathea, — when the crowds of pilgrims who were attracted by the relics and shrines of Glastonbury became so great that neither Abbey, nor Hospitium, could shelter them, the overflow was lodged. It is steeped in the

very odour of antiquity, if not of sanctity, to this hour. We were sure we inhaled the fine fragrance of ancient scrip, scallop, and "sandal-shoon," over all the sweet scents of that summer day. Dark, musty, with walls many feet thick, and small windows that, if picturesque, were not light-giving, the little coffee-room was anything but inviting. In the small courtyard pigs and hens grunted and cackled. Hard by a donkey brayed loudly. We gingerly picked our way through a narrow passage where a maid was on her knees, busy with scrubbing-brush and a pail of unmentionably dirty water, and asked to be directed to the Abbey.

It was very near. Across the street, under an archway, then on through an alley which seemed to be used as a receptacle for broken-down wagons, plows, and dilapidated gear of all descriptions, till we reached a little door with a bell. Beyond this were the majestic solitudes of Glastonbury, and we entered in.

All was silent as the grave. As has been our good fortune so many times before, again we had the wide, still spaces all to ourselves. It seemed as if all the world were dead. Slowly, we two sworn friends, who had seen and felt so much together, strolled onward over the thick green turf until we reached what once had been the glorious Abbey. The sky over our heads was as blue as the great altar of sapphire that the chronicler declares was presented to Glastonbury by St. David, and borne thither by angels. The sun shone as never shone the diamonds and precious stones that adorned its countless shrines. The air was sweeter than any incense that ever floated from its golden censers.

The immensity, the vastness, of it all was overpowering. To have sat down and cried, womanlike, would have been a relief. One does not know where to begin. There is nothing to describe, for there is almost nothing left of what was once so magnifi-

cent. The roofless walls of St. Joseph's Chapel, which is still exceedingly beautiful, stand at the extreme west. One must pass through that, and through still another long space that was the site of an early English addition built as a connecting link between St. Joseph's and the main building, before even reaching the spot where the great west door of the vast church once swung. Standing there, the mighty sweep of the nave is before you. With bated breath you go on, and on, and on, tracing your way by slight *débris* of column and shaft and capital, the merest hints and fragments, that enable you to say, "Here were the transepts, here were the steps leading into the great choir, here was the high altar, and here were the shrines beyond it." Overhanging the nave aisles are stately trees, whose branches wave in the night winds where once, in slow procession, the stoled monks swept with chant and hymn down the length of the triforium arches. Here and there portions of the

high walls are standing — a broken arch, a crumbling column, a traceried window; but, in the main, there is only a great sweep of velvet sward, a wide stretch of lawn lying open to the heavens, where once rose the towers and turrets and soaring pinnacles of the Abbey of Glastonbury.

It is easy to believe that it covered sixty acres — it and its belongings. As you stand at the extreme east, beyond the site of the altar, and look down the immense distance, the lofty arches of St. Joseph's Chapel dwindle to the size of a child's toy.

Lying about, close to the crumbling walls, are empty sarcophagi. My companion had strolled off to examine a richly carved moulding, and I sat resting in the shade. Suddenly something white stirred softly in a huge gray coffin opposite me; and noiselessly, deliberately, out of that uncanny depth a great white sheep uncoiled itself, and slowly disappeared in the green distance.

But Glastonbury has other associations than those connected with abbot, monk, and friar. It figures largely in the "Idyls of the King," not only as the honoured abiding-place for a time of the mystic cup, but in connection with Arthur himself, whither, according to tradition, the blameless King was borne to die — to this very

> "island-valley of Avilion,
> Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly."

And here, according to Malmsbury, he was buried, with the fair, if faithless, Guinevere upon his breast. Between two sculptured pyramids in the Monk's Churchyard they are said to lie; and the veracious chroniclers of the olden time, whose word there is certainly none to dispute, say that in 1191 the grave was discovered and opened. Of course a coffin was found, and equally of course it bore this inscription, in Latin: "Here lies buried, in the Island of Avallonia, the renowned King Arthur." Guine-

vere's golden hair figures largely in the legend, whose authenticity, as I have stated, no living man can dispute, or disprove.

True or false, however, fact or fantasy, it was pleasant to dream away the hours of that golden afternoon; to pace the given distance between a certain well-marked window in St. Joseph's Chapel and the site of the two pyramids; and to please ourselves by imagining that we stood above the very spot where lie the ashes of Arthur and Queen Guinevere.

II

IN AND AROUND WINCHESTER

"SHALL it be 'The Black Swan,' or 'The George'? One is as good as the other, according to the guide-books."

We had grown a trifle superstitious as to the names of the inns wherein we hoped to take our ease. Altera laughed as she turned the leaves of her *vade-mecum*.

We had tried Crabs and Lobsters, White Swans and White Harts, Red Lions and Golden Lions, Unicorns, Eagles, Black Bulls, and Lambs; and we had turned coldly and resolutely away from the blandishments of "The Lion and the Snake," and other equally enticing copartnerships. Of all these creatures only one had proved to be utterly steeped in iniquity, and that

one was the type of innocence and purity — a lamb.

To the "Black Swan" we went, and it did not betray our trust. Perhaps it may not be amiss to say, while on this subject, that the station hotels are good, almost without exception, and they are by no means as noisy as one would expect them to be.

"And now — whither?" I said, after luncheon. "The castle will keep, and so will the cathedral. Shall we explore the town?"

"The town will keep also," was Altera's answer. "Let us go out to Hursley."

Very soon we were climbing the long hills lying to the southwest of Winchester, on a pilgrimage to the grave of John Keble. A drive of six or seven miles brought us to Hursley, the little village where he was vicar for many years. It is a quiet, secluded spot, of so little apparent importance that our maps of England quite ig-

nored its existence, and we could only find its whereabouts by consulting the local maps of Hampshire. Yet it is beautiful, with a certain rustic grace and simplicity that made it seem not unmeet to have been the home of the saintly singer. Almost at its entrance, and very near the roadside, stood the ivy-grown parish church, embosomed in trees and surrounded by grassy graves and humble tombs that crowd to its very feet.

It was mid-afternoon of a still, sweet summer day. The sexton was not to be found, but the church doors were opened wide to the wandering airs and the soft sunshine. God's house was hospitably free to all who chose to enter — a home, a haven of rest, a sanctuary of refuge, for every lonely, needy soul. This particular house is lovely within and without, having been restored and made beautiful by the proceeds of the "Christian Year." Needless to say that it was truly a labour of love. There are

fine brass tablets in the chancel erected in memory of its author and his wife. We were glad they were not buried there, under bricks and stones and mortar, but out in the quiet sunshine where trees waved, birds sang, and flowers blossomed — asleep side by side in the very shadow of the church and vicarage. Buttercups, daisies, and wild grasses grew close to the low tombs, nodding and dancing as gayly as if there was no such thing as death.

The Old World is a palimpsest. The parchment has been used over and over again. Even this secluded spot was no exception. As in Dumfries the mind wanders back from the statue of Robert Burns, and Gray-Friars' Church near which it stands, to that other, earlier "Church of the Minorities" which once occupied the same site, and before whose high altar Robert Bruce slew the Red Comyn, — so here we, who had come solely for the sake of John Keble, found ourselves confronted by another in-

terest. Richard Cromwell, son of Oliver, and second Lord Protector, married Dorothy, a daughter of Richard, Mayor of Merdon Castle, Hursley, and lived here during his father's protectorate, devoting himself mainly to the sports of a country gentleman. It is quaintly said that the great iconoclast "did not think highly of his son's capacity," and that he was more than willing to have him keep out of his imperious, if not imperial, presence. Richard and the fair Dorothea, and one, or more, of their children, were buried in the chancel of the old church; but changes were made when it was rebuilt. Now the tombs and monuments of the Cromwell family are in the southwest corner of the nave.

After gathering grasses and buttercups as souvenirs of Hursley Churchyard, we drove on a few miles further to pay some visits. Some hours later, returning to Winchester by another route, we followed the fair banks of the Itchen past Bishop-

Stoke and Compton, till at length we saw in the distance the green rounded height of St. Catharine's Hill, and below it the square towers of the Church and Hospital of St. Cross.

We entered in under a fine vaulted gateway with a square turret above it, and found ourselves in a small court, on one side of which was the porter's lodge. A tall, slender, gentle-eyed woman, with a little boy clinging to her skirts, responded to our knock by opening the upper half of the door. We paid our sixpences, and were about to pass on when she said, with a smile, "Will you have your dole *now*, or when you have been the rounds?"

Now, what our dole might be was quite beyond our knowledge; but, acting on the principle that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, it seemed wise to take it when it was offered.

So, "We will have it now, if you please," we said gravely. Whereupon the portress

opened the lower half of the door with a hospitable air, and bade us enter. We were in a small, dark room, one side of which was devoted to a table laden with souvenirs for sale, photographs innumerable, and dainty porcelain cups, bowls, and jugs decorated with the arms of St. Cross. But we looked round for our dole expectantly. From an urn-shaped vessel placed in a niche in the wall the portress filled two drinking-cups—horn, bound with silver—with pale, amber-coloured beer, and presented them to us with bits of bread about two inches square.

"The poor get a whole slice," she said, consolingly. The beer was not so bad as to flavour that day, but it was certainly amazingly weak. The "Wayfarer's Dole" is said to be the last known survival of the good old custom of offering food to all chance comers. We felt as if we had gone back seven centuries, notwithstanding the assurance that the Prince of Wales had

drank from that very cup only the week before. His Royal Highness must be a frequent guest — for several friends of ours have been thus honoured.

Then we passed under another gateway into the large quadrangle, and paused to look about us. In front of us was a beautiful gray church; to the east an old cloister; to the right, forming two sides of the square, a row of curious low, white houses, with very tall chimneys, connected with a longer building of the same height, but with a broad arched doorway and an imposing flight of steps. Each little house had its own little garden, gay with flowers. Around the great green quadrangle ran a broad gravelled walk. In its centre was an old sun-dial on a gray, time-eaten pedestal. As we looked, still standing near the gate, a gentle-faced old man in a black gown, with a silver cross on his breast, came slowly across the square looking at us inquiringly. There was an air of almost

infantile sweetness and simplicity about him, an atmosphere of unworldliness, so to speak, that captivated us at once. In a timorous, hesitating way he half extended his hand in welcome, and then half withdrew it again; and when we cordially gave him ours, begging him to show us the beautiful old place, he beamed and brightened, stepping off bravely as he led us from point to point, babbling delightedly like a happy child.

The "Ancient Hospital of St. Cross" is not in the least a hospital, in the modern acceptation of the word. It is a home for poor and desolate old men, and represents two distinct "foundations" — that of Bishop Henri de Blois, grandson of William the Conqueror, in 1136, and that of Cardinal Beaufort, son of old John of Gaunt, in 1444. That of Bishop Blois was intended to wholly support "thirteen poor men, feeble, and so reduced in strength that they cannot support themselves." A hundred other poor men were to be given their din-

ners daily. After the establishment of this charity, it was placed in the charge of the Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem. All went well for a time, but then came quarrels and misunderstandings, cheating and rapacity. The funds dwindled till the Hundred Men's Dinner failed, and the Thirteen Brethren had to shift for themselves. At length brave William of Wykeham came to the rescue, and recovered much of the alienated property; and in 1444 Cardinal Beaufort added large endowments, increased the buildings, and called the establishment "The Almshouse of Noble Poverty." This later foundation also had its ups and downs, becoming at last the prey of mercenary money-changers to such a degree that, on the accession of Henry VII., the income was only enough for the support of a chaplain and two brethren. By good management, however, it was at length restored to more than its original prosperity, and the present income

from both foundations is between £3,000 and £4,000.

The scheme of management provides, among other things, "that the separate existence of the two foundations of the Hospital of St. Cross and the Almshouse of Noble Poverty be clearly recognized; that the maintenance of the Hospital shall be the first charge on the combined income, and that the number of these brethren shall not be less than thirteen." It also provides that the brethren of the Almshouse of Noble Poverty shall be chosen from men who by misfortune have been reduced from wealth to penury. There are now seventeen resident brethren, besides the master and other clergy, and new buildings are about to be erected for the accommodation of a larger number.

To go back to our dear old gentleman. There was nothing he did not know, and his pride in the place was beautiful to see. Every stone in the church had a story,

every window and arch a tongue. To him there was nothing so important, nothing so well worth seeing, in the whole wide world as what he was showing us at that very moment in the quadrangle of St. Cross. His placid face seemed to be part of the scene and to belong to it. What to him was the fever and tumult of the life outside? what the surging thunder of the waves that he only heard in the far distance? what the mad whirl of the rushing, swarming, scheming, bargaining, fighting multitudes? What had his own past been? Whatever it was, he had forgotten it, with its pains and its conflicts. For him there remained, until the day of his death, only an infinite peace.

There was a lump in my throat, and a very suspicious aching, as we followed him from church to cloister, and from thence across the court to the "Hundred Mennes Hall," where the brethren still dine together on state occasions, or "gaudy days"

as our guide called them. Here the old, blackened roof-timbers still remain; here is the gallery from which grace was said and the benediction given, and where often the minstrels sang and the harpers played in the old days of knights and troubadours; here is the dais at the east for the high officials, with the humbler tables of the brothers ranged along the sides; and here is the old fireplace, clouded by the smoke of centuries. Here are the black leathern "Jacks," or jugs, wherein the beer once foamed, and, safely shrined behind glass doors, the salt-cellars and candlesticks of the great Cardinal himself. You may sit in his chair if you please, and fancy yourself Bishop of Winchester.

In the kitchen our gentle old guide showed us the great tables where the "joints" are carved.

"We choose for the best cuts," he said, "taking our turns in order. See!" and he laughed gleefully as he pointed to a

list of names fastened to the wall. "It will be my turn to-morrow, for I am Brother Comas. That's my name — the third one."

As we came out into the quadrangle again he hesitated a moment. "Would you like to see how the brethren live?" he asked. "Would it please you to see my rooms?"

Indeed it would! And he moved with great alacrity down the gravelled walk to one of the tiny houses. These are quite distinct, though not detached, each having its own tall chimney in front, projecting like a buttress.

"Here's where I live," he said, with a charming air of proprietorship. "We're very comfortable. There's no choice here. The houses are all alike."

There was a sitting-room, or parlour, with a bright little latticed window and a fire-place, a bedroom with a neat white bed, and a tiny kitchen, or buttery, with a sink

and running water. A little round table was drawn up before the fire, and the cloth was laid, with a pretty teacup and saucer and sundry other dishes. Brother Comas had evidently been about to make his own tea when our approach interrupted the ceremony. He prattled away like a pleased child, showing us all his small treasures, and evidently enjoying our interest in his affairs as much as we did. Bright little pictures and Christmas cards adorned the white walls, and he displayed with great pride a photograph of the Queen, in a walnut frame.

"We each had a picture of Her Majesty, for a present, on Coronation Day," he said. "A young lady sent them to us. It was Lord Eversley's daughter," — and we thought it was very nice of the young lady. May she live long, and be happy! "These things amuse us," he added gently. "Now you must see my garden, and have some flowers."

"To remember you by?" said Altera. "But we shall not need them for that."

I wanted a daisy, or a violet, or at least a pansy; some simple flower that should be like the old man himself. But that was not to be thought of. "They are too common," he said, and persisted in giving us great waxy, scentless, red and white fuchsias that obstinately refused to be pressed, and, in fact, dropped from their stems before we got back to the Black Swan. But we carried away with us something better than flowers — the memory of a beautiful charity, and a picture of lovely, serene old age whose colours will never fade. Good-by, dear old Brother Comas!

One should spend weeks, months, years, not days, in Winchester. There is no spot in all England better worth study, or more compact with historic associations — not even London, or the great Abbey itself where the historic heart of London beats. Its well-authenticated annals date from

B.C. 700, when its first settlers came from the north of France. Then followed the Belgæ, who named the place the White City. Julius Cæsar, with his army, visited it B.C. 54. Nearly a century later the Emperor Vespasian, cruising round the southern coast, reached the river Itchen, up which he pressed till arrested by St. Catharine's Hill, then the site of a British fort. This he captured, and so commanded the whole valley. Traces of the Roman occupation of Winchester are found on every side; and from it still run the six great Roman roads that connected it with every important town in the Kingdom. In 514 the city was taken by Cerdic, the Saxon, and a great heathen power was built up that had its headquarters at Hants, and stretched its strong arms in every direction. A wild and warlike people, tracing their descent from Odin, its Saxon conquerors lived in Teutonic fashion, and their worship was a nature worship, their altars being the hill-

tops and their sacred trees the oak and the ash. But at last there came to them a great civilizing force in the person of "Birinus, the Italian Monk, the Benedictine, the Winchester saint. . . . Wessex grew into England. And of this Wessex, this early England, Winchester became the acknowledged capital."

A glorious capital it was, the seat of learning and the arts, the home of kings, the culminating point of priestly pomp and power. High Street is English history written in stone. One can hardly say it is beautiful, though it has beautiful features, save when the moonlight irradiates, softens, and glorifies it, deepening the shadows, and making the gabled roofs, the high, narrow, rounding façades, the projecting balconies, the ancient casements, appear as if mounted in silver. At its head a noble arched gateway leads to all that is left of the ancient castle, one of the fortresses of William of Normandy, and his favourite resi-

dence. From it William Rufus went forth to the hunt on that last fatal morning. Here for twenty years Eleanora of Aquitaine lived under guard, a prisoner in her own palace. Here her son, Cœur de Lion, was welcomed by his nobles when he returned from captivity. Here kings have died and kings have been born; here lust has reigned, and rapine and intrigue; and here foul murder has been done till the courtyard ran with blood, as befitted a mediæval castle. But all that remains now is the great hall, with its lofty marble columns supporting the groined roof, and its fine thirteenth century windows that give it a most churchly air — all save the base of a tower, some traces of a moat, and a subterranean passage or two.

But what is that great round thing hanging on the wall?

"That round thing, madam," says the guide, severely but impressively — "that round thing is the Table of King Arthur!"

We held our breath. It was the next thing to making believe find his grave, and Guinevere's, at Glastonbury.

The "round thing" is a great wooden wheel, with something that looks like a Tudor rose in the centre, from which radiate twenty-four divisions, each bearing the name of a knight. A grotesque figure of the blameless King at once crowns and binds together the circle. The framework at the back of the curious structure certainly gives some plausibility to the idea that it may once have been the top of a table; as there seem to be mortises for twelve legs, as well as for a support in the middle. At any rate, it is very old, for a chronicler who died four centuries ago refers to it in connection with the castle; and it was regarded as a noteworthy antique as far back as the reign of Henry VI.

It is a mortifying, if ludicrous, fact that travellers sometimes shed their tears, metaphorically speaking, on the wrong spot —

an experience that befell us at Winchester. The old, old story, even if it is a fable, of Henry II. and Eleanor, Rosamond, the bower, and the silken clue at Woodstock, was enough to make us feel interested in the place of the Queen's long imprisonment here. One day we started out to find it. It was before we had been to the castle; and, perhaps not unnaturally, as the guide-books gave us no information on that point, we supposed that edifice and the royal palace to be quite distinct. We went first to the college — the famous "Seinte Marie College of Wynchestre," founded by William of Wykeham, and the Alma Mater of so many of England's best and bravest. But it was vacation. The fine old buildings were undergoing a "transitional" process by way of housecleaning and general freshening up, that would have done their learned founder's heart good had he been there to see. We had to content ourselves with glimpses of the gateways, the

quadrangles, and the cloisters. Boys will be boys, even if they afterward grow to be bishops; and if deprived of the glorious privilege of using their jackknives on oaken benches, they will find a way to hew their names in stone. It was something to read, cut by his own hand, "Thos. Ken. 1646." Years afterward, his evening and morning hymns were written for a manual of prayers arranged for the use of the Winchester boys.

But as we could not gain admission to the chapel or refectory, we did not linger long. Once more outside, and wandering down an outlying street, we came to the remains of a moat, a high wall, and a gate. It was fastened; but as we looked through the bars we saw a boy in a cart driving down a winding, shaded road toward us.

"What is this place?" I asked, for we saw ruins and an ivy-mantled tower in the distance. "Can we go in?"

"It is the old palace, lady," the lad an-

swered. "I am at work in there, and have orders to keep the gate fastened. But if you want to go in while I am gone with this load, I can let you out when I come back."

The old palace of Winchester, of which we were in search! Accepting the offer of temporary imprisonment gladly, we entered the still, shady inclosure and wandered about the pile of crumbling ruins, so entrancingly beautiful in their picturesque, ivy-wreathed decay, for a long half-hour, wondering out of which of the fair casements the imprisoned Queen had looked with tear-wet eyes when, in that memorable letter to the Pope, she declared herself to be "Eleanora, by the *wrath* of God Queen of England." She may have been a bad woman — as undoubtedly she was — but she was also so wretched in her last sorrow-laden years that no woman can refuse to pity her.

The boy came back at last and let us out.

Months afterward, by close study of a map of Winchester, we unfortunately discovered that the ruins over which we had heaved our sighs were those of the magnificent Bishop's Palace which was demolished by the soldiers of the Commonwealth, and is not known to have had any connection whatever with the once gay and beautiful Eleanora of Aquitaine.

III

WINCHESTER AND ITS SHADOW PICTURES

MEANWHILE, had we not seen the Cathedral? Certainly we had, and more than once. But who shall attempt to describe that which is indescribable? Externally, Winchester is less beautiful than its neighbours, Salisbury and Wells. It is grand, sombre, fortress-like, this largest of the English cathedrals, which is 556 feet from east to west—forty-two feet longer than majestic Canterbury. The vast mountain of stone seems heavy; and one longs for soaring spires and lofty turrets to lift it heavenward. But all this is forgotten when once one enters in at the comparatively low west entrance, and the eye takes in the splendid, unbroken



West Front, Winchester Cathedral

sweep of nave and choir and presbytery, to the great altar and the glorious window above it. The choir-screen is so low that one looks over it into the glory beyond; and if the cathedral visitor ever feels like chanting a Te Deum, it is when he can do this. Even here he would almost be willing to sacrifice the white reredos, with its exquisite, lace-like, airy pinnacles, for the sake of being able to see in one swift glance what lies behind it. Yet doubtless the mighty builders knew what they were about. It is well sometimes to go on "from glory to glory."

If it did not come to him in some rare dream of the night for which he was in no wise responsible, William of Wykeham was a bold man when he conceived the idea of changing the heavy Norman columns of the nave into the springing, soaring, perpendicular Gothic. Yet the untouched transepts are so magnificent in their massive, Titanic grandeur, that one

could almost sympathize with one of the enthusiastic vergers, who exclaimed, with a wave of the hand that included the whole lofty nave, "With all due reverence for our noble William of Wykeham, I sometimes wish he had let it alone!"

Winchester is rich beyond all words in shrines and tombs and chantries innumerable, where the insensate marble blossoms into airy, flower-like forms that seem too delicate to be the work of the human chisel. In one of the proudest of all, on the very spot where, as a boy, he prayed, William of Wykeham, architect, bishop, chancellor, keeper of the privy seal, and founder of two colleges, sleeps his last sleep in a bed of his own devising.

The mere roll-call of the men who are buried in Winchester stirs the soul like the sound of a trumpet — kings, cardinals, warriors, and statesmen, whose words and deeds changed the destinies of nations. Here, too, in the north aisle of the nave,

with the soaring, fan-traceried vaultings of the roof bending over her like tree-tops, lies gentle, white-souled Jane Austen, and near her brilliant Lady Montague. Mindful of certain young men I know, who love old Isaac Walton better than any priest or prelate of them all, I tried long and vainly to find his tomb. Then I appealed to the verger. "Come with me," he whispered —for it was during the evening service. Leading the way to Prior Silkstede's Chapel, he lifted a rug from the floor, and on a dingy black marble slab I read this:

"Here Lyeth the body of
MR. IZAAK WALTON,
Who dyed the 16th of December,
1683.

Alas! Hee's gone before,
Gone to returne no more.
Our panting Breasts aspire
After their aged sire,
Whose well spent life did last
Full ninety years, and past,

But now he hath begun
That which shall nere be done,
Crowned with eternall Blisse
We wish our souls with his.
Votis modestis sic plerunt liberi."

It did not seem a fitting resting-place for the gentle angler, in that dark corner, with a weight of marble on his breast. He should lie with Keble, instead, in the sunny churchyard at Hursley.

Winchester suffered terribly during many a civil war, even before the days of the Roundheads. But Cromwell's troopers seemed to have an especial spite against it. They used the beautiful choir and presbytery as stables, and made kindling wood of the exquisite oak carving of the stalls. There is scarcely a spot where intolerance and iconoclasm have not wrought their wild will. The great west window is now filled with precious fragments of thirteenth century glass which were collected by some pious soul after the spears

of the Roundheads had done their work of destruction. Every tomb, every effigy, every base and column, shows the marks of the disfiguring hammer. On one of the mural monuments are sculptured figures of three lovely little boys. One has lost both feet, another his hands, and the other his nose. One room is a storehouse of fragments — headless trunks, broken legs, arms, and heads, some of them of great beauty. The wholesale destruction is sickening. But nothing touched us so deeply as the empty coffin of a baby, with the stone pillow hollowed out to receive the little head. It was a hard couch, at the best, for which to exchange a mother's soft, warm bosom. Yet the baby could not keep even that, and its ashes are scattered to the four winds.

While we were in this "chamber of horrors," a Scotchwoman, tall, grave, sedate, and severe, with a group of young girls in her charge, joined our party. The lassies were

shocked at the wanton, wholesale slaughter of the innocents. "It is such a pity! such a pity!" cried one of them, touching a mutilated arm with her soft fingers.

"No! no!" exclaimed the elder woman, turning upon her sharply. "Do not say that! It was a war with superstition. Remember that with every blow of the hammer a soul was set free."

But young Scotia, as well as young America, has ideas of its own. The girl coloured to the temples under the rebuke of her chaperon; but she repeated, half under her breath, "Nevertheless, I am sorry; I cannot see how this was serving God, or doing His will."

Winchester is a place wherein to see visions and to dream dreams. In spite of one's will, the spiritual eye grows blind to the splendours of to-day, the spiritual ear grows dead to the echoing thunder of the great organ, the voices of the chanters chanting ever so loudly, the swell of the

high anthems, and the intoning of the prayers. What does it matter that much has changed, and that there is little, or nothing, visible now to recall the Anglo-Saxon cathedral up whose humbler nave Egbert the Saxon, first king of all England, marched to his crowning? So does yonder tree change, season by season. There is not a fibre of it, root, trunk, bough, branch, or leaf, that did its office a hundred years ago. Yet it is the same tree. And so we may truly say it was here that Alfred came to pray; it was to this altar the people crowded in their extremity with the heaven-piercing cry, "Deliver us, O Lord, from the fury of the Northmen." Twenty years more, and up the broad aisles sweeps a bridal train, and Ethelred the Unready weds Emma, the Fair Maid of Normandy, the fame of whose beauty has come down to this far day. Fair indeed she must have been on that bridal morn in the pride of her youth and loveliness, the pomp and

splendour of her marriage robes, and the gleam of the jewels that her eyes outshone.

But the pageant fades, the picture changes. Dim lights burn low upon the altar, only intensifying the deep shadows that lurk in the near spaces. All else is dark and sombre. No ray of the faint, far light penetrates the deep gloom without the choir, or gilds its darkness with a passing glory. Prone on the steps of the altar a woman clad in sackcloth lies all night long, with her fair hair dishevelled and her cheeks pale with prayer and watching. "Mother of sorrows, help me, save me!" she cries, lifting her clasped hands to the pitying face of the Virgin. For, on the morrow, Emma of Normandy, wife of Ethelred, and mother of Edward the Confessor, now a faded woman whose youth has fled like a dream, is by her own demand to undergo as a test of innocence the fearful ordeal by fire; and to walk barefoot over the nine red-hot ploughshares placed

yonder in the nave. Whether this demand is born of conscious rectitude, or of bravado, let us not inquire too closely. Yet, ere another nightfall, her proud son Edward shall kneel in abasement and submit to penance before this same altar, imploring pardon of Heaven and of her.

Hark! to the tramp and the neighing of steeds, to the shouts and oaths of retainers and grooms, to the clashing of armour and the ringing of steel. The west door swings open. With a dozen men-at-arms at his heels, who comes hither in brazen helmet and shirt of mail, with breastplate and hauberk, spear and shield? He comes from Southampton, and his name is Canute. The stony pavement rings beneath his tread, as he strides on past the great tower-piers into the choir, and hangs his jewelled crown above the high altar. It is an offering from him whom the sea would not obey, to Him who made the sea — the King of kings.

Many another comes and goes; and now it is "the smiling season of the year, when days are long and bright" — Whitsunday, 1068. The great church is ablaze with light and colour, decked for a festival indeed, with hangings of purple and cloth of gold, rich embroideries, and laces worth a duke's ransom. From door to chancel are spread the wondrous tapestries of France and the Orient, for one cometh whom the King delights to honour. How shall William of Normandy more fitly celebrate the coronation of Matilda, his queen, than by being himself recrowned, with a pomp and splendour that shall quite overshadow the earlier ceremony at Westminster? Hearken now to the joyful clamour of the bells, and the peal of the great organ as the stately procession advances! How eagerly do the nobles of England, her knights and barons, lean forward to catch the first glimpse of their Norman queen! Her step is full of grace and dignity, her mien is majesty

itself. Her face is beautiful and delicate; her hair falls in long, waving tresses beneath her transparent veil. And see! she wears the "mantle worked at Winchester by Aldaret's wife" — for the Saxon women were famed even then for their fine needlework. Beneath it the modest stole is gathered round the throat in regular folds; and a robe of silver tissue, with falling sleeves, and a gemmed girdle confining the rich plaits that sweep the ground, completes a costume worthy of a Greek goddess. Pass on, Matilda of Flanders, and bend your stately head to receive the crown from Aldred, Archbishop of York. But as you receive it, pray — for there are dark days coming, wherein your woman's heart shall quail. Shall curfew ring to-night, O lovely queen?

Storm and tempest, and a mighty rushing wind; the fierce glare of the lightning, and the crashing of thunderbolts. No festal day is this. The church is sombre as the

grave that yawns beneath the great tower. Yet scarcely a man or woman in England, or in the whole earth, mourns, though an arrow has hit the mark in New Forest, and a bloody corse is borne hither for burial. Lay it down if you dare, in this consecrated spot, O lords and nobles! Say your prayers over it, O priests! But the very stones of your tower will cry out at the sacrilege, and refuse to lift their fine tracery above the dust of William Rufus.

Again the vision changes. Who is this, the embodiment of martial and manly grace, "with yellow curls, a bright complexion, and a figure like Mars himself" —who but Cœur de Lion, bold knight, valiant crusader, challenger of Saladin, troubadour, minstrel, and poet, just home from the wars and ready for his second crowning here at Winchester? Verily, there must have been a strange charm in the wearing of coronation robes, or else the crown was most unstable, when the cere-

monial had need to be so oft repeated. Slowly the young king moves from arch to arch, under a canopy of white satin with golden fringe, which is borne on the glittering lances of four noble knights, his comrades on the tented field. From every coign of vantage myriads of eyes are bent upon him, and the noise of the slight stirring of the multitude is like the rustling of leaves in a mighty forest. Richard wears a rose-coloured tunic belted round the waist, and over it is a long mantle of striped silver tissue, embroidered with silver half-moons. His sword of fine Damascus steel has a hilt of gold, and on those yellow curls a plumed and jewelled cap sits jauntily. Many a maiden's heart beats quickly as his bold, bright eyes do homage to the fairest of the fair — for is not her monarch the very flower of chivalry, the rose and thorn of war? And is there not a wild rumour of estrangement between him and Berengaria of Navarre? Strange things may come to pass!

of Saint George, and of his Fader and Moder."

But the multiplied "Blessynges" failed to bring him long life, and the next pageant in which our young Prince Arthur bore part was that of his burial.

Now another century has passed. Where shall Henry VIII. entertain his friend and royal brother, the Emperor Charles V., if not in Winchester Castle, and where shall the two saintly *confrères* say their prayers if not in the Cathedral? They kneel at the confessional; they pay their oblations; they receive absolution for their royal sins; and then off they go, striding down the nave with clash of sword and glint of spur, ready for new deeds of darkness — murder, and rapine, and the betrayal of the innocent.

There is a "cruel wind and a down-pouring rain" on Monday, July 25, 1554, when Philip of Spain, with a cavalcade of four thousand gentlemen, rides into Win-

chester to meet his bride, Mary of England. But first — for, cruel and bigoted and immoral as he is, he is "strict in all religious observances" — the impatient bridegroom piously comes hither to pray. Already the vast arches are being made glorious for the bridal that shall bring such woe to England. The church is "richly hanged with Arras and Cloth of Gold," and "from the west dore unto the Roode" is a raised platform "covered all with Redd Saye," on which their imperial highnesses are to walk to their "traverses," or thrones, "underneth the Roode Lofte." It is Wednesday now, and the imposing ceremonial begins. The Prince, magnificently apparelled and "accompanyed by a great nomber of the Nobles of Spaine in such sorte as the like hath not been seen," and Her Majesty, in more than equal magnificence, attended by the flower of the English nobility, pass through the choir into the Lady-Chapel, where their vows are

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to be exchanged. Six bishops, with their croziers borne before them, take part in the stately service, when, in the name of the realm, Mary is given away by the Marquis of Winchester. The chapel is ablaze with jewels, but when the ring is placed upon the royal finger, it is a plain circlet. Her Majesty wills to be "wedded with a plain hoop of gold, like any other maiden."

Let us turn away — for from this brilliant marriage shall come pain and travail and unutterable woe. English blood shall flow like water, and fires shall be kindled that will be the very flames of hell.

Thus it is that the shadow pictures come and go all the while that the prayers are being prayed, and the anthems chanted, and the high pure voices of the choir boys soar like skylarks into the far heaven of the roof.

Is that the benediction? Let us go hence.

IV

A BOY BISHOP

WHEN we reached Salisbury on a certain fair evening late in June we were still under the strong enchantment of the spells woven about us by Wells and Glastonbury. We were still living and moving in a dream from which we were slow to awaken. Perhaps it was for this reason solely that Salisbury seemed to us an enchanter less subtle, less powerful, than its neighbours.

Be this as it may, and making all due allowance for moods and tenses, it is certain that we found Salisbury Cathedral more beautiful and charming than impressive. The witchery, the glamour, of moonlight seems a part of Wells, and to belong to it. Winchester is bathed in a twilight glory, indescribable, incommunicable. But Salis-

bury, wonderfully beautiful in its exterior, with its setting of green closes and overshadowing trees, with its soaring spire, so light, so graceful, so airy, that the eye follows its upward flight into the blue sky as it follows the flight of a bird, yet lacks something of the atmosphere of romance and mystery. It is broad, clear daylight. The whole magnificent structure is gay, brilliant, almost buoyant, rather than grand. The shining floors, the glittering, glistering brass of choir-screen and lectern, the green lustre of the polished Purbeck shafts, all are radiant in the clear white light that streams into the gloriously vaulted nave from the triple lancets of the great clerestory windows. Here are no brooding shadows, no deep, mysterious recesses wherein thought and imagination lose themselves; here is no "dim, religious light," strained through jewelled casements that hold the captive sunshine of six hundred years. So bright and fair is the vast airy space, that the tombs

and effigies ranged in long rows beneath the great arches seem strangely out of place. One wonders how they can sleep here so quietly, these mail-clad warriors, these stately beauties in ruff and girdled robe, these saintly men and women whose clasped hands have been lifted in mute, imploring prayer for so many centuries. The roll-call is long, and the names are famous. Here lies William Longspee, son of Henry II. and Fair Rosamond Clifford, in chain mail, with his good sword by his side, and on his left arm his shield, bearing six lions rampant. The sturdy legs are uncrossed, to show us he was no crusader in spite of shield and surcoat. But yonder lies his son, with hand on hilt of sword, a lion at his feet, and his legs crossed like those of the bronze knights in Temple Church. This second William Longspee was one of the most celebrated of the crusaders under Saint Louis, and was slain fighting for cross and holy sepulchre at Cairo in 1250.

There, too, in the Lady-Chapel, with no "marble herse" to mark the spot, are the ashes of —

"The glory of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,"

whose name, thus embalmed, will outlast that of any knight or crusader of them all.

We lingered long beside the tomb of the Boy Bishop, on which lies the effigy of a child not more than three feet long, but wearing the robe and mitre of a bishop. In the small left hand is the pastoral staff, and the right is raised in benediction. There is a curious legend connected with this tomb. The story goes that upon St. Nicholas' Day the boys of the choir were accustomed to elect, from their own number, one who for a month (or till Holy Innocents' Day) was known as the Boy or Choral Bishop, while the other boys acted as canons. What part they took in the ordinary worship of the month, this

chronicler is unable to say. But on the eve of Innocents' Day they all attended the Cathedral service in great state, entering by the west door in due processional pomp, and proceeded, chanting, up the nave to the high altar. There was swinging of incense and burning of tapers as the magnificent service went on "according to the use of Sarum."

Out of this curious religious pageant was evolved, so to speak, the Collect, "O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength," etc. In this particular instance, the Boy Bishop died during the month of his "little brief authority" and was buried, like a real prelate, with great pomp and in full pontifical robes.

It is a pity to spoil this pretty story, but alas! the world is given over to iconoclasts. There are those who regard it as a fable, a myth, and maintain that this small marble is nothing more nor less than an

effigy in miniature of some one of the old bishops of Sarum, whose very name is forgotten. Yet no one knows of a surety; and as we are told that "Blind unbelief is sure to err," we may as well keep unwavering faith in the Boy Bishop of Salisbury.

Another monument that interested us deeply, not for the beauty it lacks, but for its historic associations, was that of Edward, Earl of Hertford, and his Countess, the sister of Lady Jane Grey. For this marriage he was imprisoned, as was she also. But the wife was more fortunate than the husband. They were separated by her release from the Tower, and she died the following year, while he lingered long in durance. Now here they lie peacefully together, — reunited after a separation of almost sixty years. Peace to their ashes!

Salisbury is unique in one respect at least. Most of the English cathedrals

were long in building. They grew slowly from age to age, — outgrowths of the thought and handiwork and devotion of many successive generations. This one sprang up, comparatively, in a day; and the day, as to architecture, was that of the then new, or pointed, style — the Early English. Of this it still remains one of the most perfect examples. It was only thirty-eight years from foundation stone to consecration.

When one paces the long gray arcades of the cloisters, he has no visions of tonsured monks. Salisbury being a cathedral of the old foundation — i.e., one whose chapter has always been collegiate, rather than monastic — these were never the cloisters of a monastery. In point of fact, they are of later date than the rest of the building, and are beautiful exceedingly.

So is the noble octagonal chapter-house, with its soaring roof upheld by the graceful central column, arching like the spray of a

fountain, its beautiful doorway and entrance arch, and its curious sculptures. After all, when one recalls the manifold beauties of fair Salisbury, it seems cruel to quarrel with it for any lack of sombre, impressive stateliness.

V

A GLORIOUS TRIO

A FIRST visit to London cannot be other than fatiguing, bewildering, overwhelming. The vastness, the majesty of it all, one's sense of the shortness of time and the limitations of strength, the eagerness to do and to see, to listen to the voices of the storied streets, to tread in the footsteps of the mighty dead, and to make the most of the associations swarming at every corner, — all these keep one continually on the rack. London is indeed the heart of the world, and to listen to its mighty throbbings is overpowering.

We had seen too much, thought too much, felt too much; and the reaction had come when we took the Great West-

ern Railway *en route* for Peterborough. But our spirits rose as we left London, and before we fairly lost sight of its multitudinous chimney-pots, we were like children out of school. Two hours brought us to our destination, in the heart of the low fen country. Flat, and often marshy, intersected by canal-like ditches, with windmills towering aloft and whirling their giant arms, it was like a little glimpse of Holland. Why is a windmill always a picturesque feature in a landscape? There seems to be no reason why it should be any more attractive to the æsthetic sense than a barn with a weather-vane. But the fact remains.

Night was falling as we rolled into the borough of St. Peter, and in two hours we were asleep.

The next morning we sallied forth to explore the ancient city; in other words, to find the Cathedral, which is the town's reason for being. Soon we reached the busy

market-place, with its stalls and booths, its carts and carriages, its patient little donkeys, and its meek horses gravely munching oats from bags swinging under their noses. It was market-day. The place was full of animation and colour, with blue and white umbrellas spreading themselves impartially over roses and cabbages. Traversing the wide, open space, we passed through a well-preserved Norman gateway and were in the Cathedral close, where we caught our first view of the magnificent façade with its flanking towers, its pointed gables, and the three majestic recessed arches that are the despair of painter, poet, and archæologist.

This façade is considered open to criticism. It has been said that the building within does not keep the promise of this glorious front; that the architect, whose very name is forgotten, made technical blunders; in short, that he did not make the west front of Peterborough Ca-

thedral absolutely perfect. Let us hope he sleeps well in his unknown grave, undisturbed by this knowledge. At the least, it may be said that he created something that is uniquely imposing and superlatively beautiful.

Standing at the western gate of the Abbey, then, — the gate built by Abbot Benedict, — we paused to look about us. The Abbey? Yes, for Peterborough was originally one of the chief Benedictine monasteries in England. As a cathedral it dates back to the time of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. John Chambers being abbot then, he prostrated himself at the feet of Henry, and acknowledged king instead of pope as supreme head of the Church. Gurton, the historian, says as to this submission, "The good Abbot liked to sleep in a whole skin, and wished to die in his nest where he had lived so long." Yet a nobler motive may have swayed him, — the strong desire to save



West Front, Peterborough Cathedral.

from destruction the altars at which he had ministered. Be this as it may, in 1541 Abbot John Chambers became first Bishop of Peterborough, and as good a Protestant as the best of them.

But to go back to the beautiful west gateway of "Peterborough the Proud," where, in the days of the old Abbey, king and courtier, prince and peasant, were required to put their shoes from off their feet before entering the holy precincts. As we stand here, before us is the west front of the Cathedral, glorious in the morning sunshine, with every turret, tower, and pinnacle standing out in bold relief against a clear blue sky. The deep, recessed arches are in shadow, darkly majestic as the entrance into Hades. To the north of it is another old gateway, arched and battlemented, which leads to the deanery, and to the quiet sanctuary of the graveyard lying close in the shadow of the church. To the south — Peterborough being rich in

gateways — is still another; a fine bit of early English, with groined roof and clustered shafts. This is the entrance to the Bishop's Palace. On our left is an old building that was once the chancel of the costly chapel consecrated to St. Thomas à Becket. Secularized and grown worldly in its mouldy old age, it is now a museum of natural history.

A young girl stood in the doorway. Would the ladies like to walk in and see the exhibition? It was under the direct patronage of the Queen, and Her Majesty was indeed one of the chief contributors.

Wondering whether we were to see herbariums or impaled butterflies, Kensington embroidery or drawn-work, we paid our shilling and went in, to find that the "exhibition" was one of relics, — relics of Mary Queen of Scots, — and we counted ourselves especially fortunate in thus stumbling upon it unawares. Strange are the reverses of time. There were few in Eng-

land who sorrowed at her death-sentence, and fewer still who gainsaid it. Yet here, after the lapse of just three centuries, sacred relics of the "martyred queen" were gathered from all quarters of the kingdom, and the chapel of St. Thomas was again a shrine.

Fotheringay Castle, the scene of her last imprisonment and of her execution, was eleven miles from Peterborough. The strong fortress is now not even a ruin. Not one stone is left upon another. But here was a model, or rather a map in clay; and one could easily rebuild the stately walls and count the bulwarks thereof. Here was the veil of light gauze tissue, with a legend wrought in gold thread upon the border, which Jane Kennedy took from Mary's head when her eyes were bandaged. Here was the slender gold chain and crucifix which the unfortunate queen removed from her own neck and threw round that of one of her ladies in waiting. Here was the rosary she

wore that day at her girdle, and the cross she held in her hand when dying. Here was the agate tankard, or caudle cup, with hinged cover and silver gilt mountings, from which she drank the night before her execution and then gave to Sir James Balfour. It is one of the heirlooms of the family of Bruce of Kennet. Here was a curious "jewel," said to have been given to Mary by the Dauphin before their marriage, — a gold bar on which is a small figure of a boy catching a mouse. The trinket is set with diamonds and rubies, and has a large pearl as a pendant. Here were many rings and a jewelled stomacher; a silver-gilt hand-bell covered with curious devices, and several watches with her monogram. And here, O shade of Walter Scott! here was the very key that unlocked the water-gate at Loch Leven, — the key that Ronald Græme stole from Lady Douglas.

The portraits were many, and no two resembled each other very closely. They

varied as much as opinions do with regard to Mary Stuart. There were some exquisite ivory miniatures, showing a young, unshadowed face, perfect in its loveliness. In a glass case were laces she had worn, and embroideries wrought during her long captivity. In connection with each article was its genealogy, so to speak, given so clearly that its genuineness could not be disputed.

One of the articles sent by Victoria was an ebony cabinet inlaid with ivory, and decorated with tortoise shell and silver. Another was a box with a glass cover, on the satin lining of which a long, heavy tress of golden-brown hair lay coiled. There were prayer-books and missals; and, saddest and most painfully suggestive of all, here was the chair in which she sat that February morning in 1587, and from which she rose when, assisted by her faithful Melvin, she groped her way blindly to the block. It brought that far-away scene

very near; and remembering the "little shag dog" that "hid itself under her royal robes" as she sat in this old chair, and with almost human moans lavished caresses upon her body when all was over, I blessed the tiny creature for its faithful love. Its fidelity touched even the stern men around her, and was mentioned in the official account transmitted to my Lord of Burleigh.

When we came out of what seemed like a charnel house, the open air and the joyous summer day were welcome. We crossed the green close, went through Abbot Kirton's gateway into the churchyard, and there found Old Mortality himself cleaning a gravestone.

Beyond this point, at the northeast, the best general view of the Cathedral is gained; for here the eye takes in the whole majestic sweep from the pinnacles and turrets flanking the arches of the façade, the bell-tower of the northwestern tran-

sept, the Norman buttresses of the nave, the great eastern transept with its Norman windows, filled in now with Perpendicular tracery, and so on to the exquisitely beautiful "New Building" (so-called, though it existed when America was a *terra incognita*), with its rich parapet crowned with statues, and the round-arched Norman apse rising in double tiers above it. As we pass round the east end to the south, we see the ruins of the old monastic buildings,—the infirmary with its lines of perfect arches, the refectory, the lavatories, the cloisters, the columns and foliated capitals, the windows and doorways—all eloquent in their picturesque decay. Old Mortality, who followed us, was garrulous, but we forgave him when he took us into the house of one of the canons. It was formerly the chapel of St. Lawrence, the very chancel itself. As we passed through the silent rooms (for the family was absent), we wondered if life went on in that once

sacred atmosphere just as elsewhere, with its petty needs and petty details, its joys and its heartbreaks.

When we got round to the west again, we went in beneath the frowning, shadowy arches, to meet our first disappointment. The long, narrow nave, with its flat wooden roof, sloping slightly to the supporting columns, and fantastically painted in a strange lozenge-shaped pattern, was before us; but everything beyond it was cut off by a rough board partition. Peterborough was undergoing the process of restoration. Came to us the verger, however; and, after a little persuasion, he led us in behind the scenes, where we found that an old cathedral in undress was quite as interesting as under other conditions. One was willing to miss much for the sake of seeing the very beginnings of things. It was chaos come again, but chaos with a purpose.

Picking our way over piles of *débris* and heaps of rubbish, we looked down where

the heavy stone flagging of the great transept had been lifted with infinite toil, into a just-discovered subterranean passage leading to a treasure house of Peterborough monks in the seventh century. We touched the very stones and mortar of the old monastery of Medeshamstede, where Paeda and Oswi, in the words of the old Saxon chronicle, "began the ground wall, and wrought thereon."

Imbedded in coarse, crumbling sand, which seemed half sea-shells, we saw a great stone coffin in process of resurrection. It had lain there, unseen of human eye, for eleven centuries; and now the tomb was opened, not by the voice of God or the trump of Gabriel, but by blows of hammer and pickaxe in the hands of stalwart workmen of alien race and creed. Hours passed unheeded as we lingered there, in dust and turmoil, watching the process of "restoration" and repair, — the scraping of columns, the removal of vandal

paint and whitewash, and the restoring of that which was lost.

"It is more interesting even than spring house-cleaning in New England, — don't you think so?" said Altera, brushing the white dust from the sleeve of her jacket. And as I drew my skirts more closely about me, I truthfully answered, "Yes!"

Such was the disorder reigning in Warsaw, that we had only a glimpse of the beautiful "New Building," with its Perpendicular windows and the lovely fan tracery of the roof. The effect is singularly like that of King's College Chapel at Cambridge, which was built about the same time, and possibly by the same architect.

Peterborough is less rich in famous tombs than some of its sister cathedrals. But here were buried Katharine of Aragon and Mary of Scotland. The dust of the former still lies in the north choir aisle under a slab of blue stone. Time is fast obliterating the simple inscription, "Queen

Catharine, A.D. 1536." Yet, if the legend be true, the whole Cathedral is her monument. The story goes that when Henry was implored to raise a stone, or a statue, to her memory, he answered: "I will give her the finest monument in all England;" and that for her sake Peterborough survived the destruction of the monasteries. That this is somewhat apocryphal goes without saying. Yet Shakespeare may have heard it when he puts that last pathetic speech on record: —

"Embalm me,
Then lay me forth; although unqueened, yet still
A queen, and daughter to a King inter me."

In the south choir aisle a marble slab marks the spot where Mary Stuart lay for twenty-five years. She was beheaded February 8, but remained unburied till July 30. Few events in history are more thrilling in their suggestiveness: the mid-

night gathering of friends and retainers, the torch-light procession winding its slow way from Fotheringay to Peterborough, the superb coffin lifted high, the lofty chariot covered with black cloth, preceded by the Garter King-at-Arms and other heralds, the guard of mounted horsemen, the black-robed mutes, the nodding plumes, the trailing banners, and all the solemn pomp and stately ceremonial of that far day. Out from windows and doorways peered the startled faces of rustics, awakened from their sleep by the tread of many feet, albeit there was neither sound of bugle or blare of trumpet.

At the Cathedral gate the procession was received by Bishop Howland, Dean Fletcher, and their attendant priests. The coffin was borne silently across the close, through the wide arches, and up the nave, to the vault made ready in the choir. On the following day imposing funeral rites were observed, the Countess of Bedford

appearing as Queen Elizabeth's representative in the rôle of chief mourner!

A lofty "herse" hung with black velvet was raised over the grave, and remained there till, James I. being King, all that was left of Mary Stuart was removed to Westminster Abbey.

As we passed out of the great west door, we paused to look again at the portrait of "Old Scarlet," the sexton. Perhaps it looks slightly out of place, — the quaint, homely figure in scarlet coat and trunk hose, with a bunch of keys in one hand and a spade in the other. But the inscription under it tells the old man's story and explains his presence here. It does not fall to the lot of every sexton to "inter two queens."

The "fen country" was once a chain of lakes and water-courses, studded with islands. As the "resonant steam eagles"

bore us towards the ancient town of Ely, we seemed to hear the dip of oars, the sound of the wind among the reeds, the chiming of sweet-toned bells, and the singing of the monks. The pulsing and throbbing of the ears seemed set to music, and to repeat over and over the song of King Canute.

"Sweetly sang the monks at Ely.
Knüt, the king row'd nigh;
'Listen how the winds be bringing
From yon church a holy singing!
Row, men, nearer by!'

"Loudly sang the monks at Ely
On that Thursday morn;
'Twas the feast of God ascended —
Of the wondrous drama ended;
God for sinners born!

"Sweetly sang the monks at Ely.
Knüt, the king row'd nigh;
'Listen to the angels bringing
Holy thoughts that seem like singing;
Row, men, nearer by!'"

Canute, however, would hardly recognize his song in this later version, which is yet

an old one. Here is one verse of another, still older.

"Merie sungen the Muneches binnen Ely,
Tha Cnüt ching rew ther by.
Rowe ye cnites noer the lant,
And here we thes Muneches saeng."

But as the men obeyed, and rowed "yet nearer" on that fair Thursday morn, their eyes did not rest on a single stone of the majestic structure we see to-day. The Saxon queen, Etheldreda, founded a monastery at Ely in 673, and, withdrawing from court, became its Abbess. It flourished for two hundred years, was burned by the Danes, was rebuilt under the Benedictine rule in 970, became a "camp of refuge" and the last stronghold of the Saxons, and finally surrendered to William the Conqueror, in 1071. About ten years after, the foundations of the present Cathedral were laid by Simeon, the first Norman Abbot. But Etheldreda has always been the patron saint of Ely. As soon as

Simeon's church was far enough advanced, her remains were translated from the graveyard to a stately shrine behind the high altar.

"Did you never tire of cathedrals, going thus from one to another? Was it not rather monotonous?" — are questions that may reasonably be asked; as, indeed, they have been asked more than once.

As well might one tire of sunset, or moonshine; of the splendour of winter starlight, of the leaping of waters, or of the faces of friends. Cathedrals are alike and yet unlike; and the likeness is as great a charm as the unlikeness. To know that the general features are the same, that under all the diversity some things are certain and uniform, is the rock that one learns to rest upon, as on the procession of the seasons, or the fact that day follows day. "Monotonous?" As we had gazed spell-bound upon the mighty arches of Peterborough, so now we stood in awe-

struck silence beneath the enormous towers of Ely, and in the shadow of its huge buttresses.

Tower on tower, pinnacle on pinnacle, turret on turret, — all soaring together in majestic harmony, piercing the far blue heavens, yet studded with bas-reliefs and crowned with statues. It was like the exuberance of nature, — as if the vast pile had grown from pure delight of growing, with no help from human hands. It seemed to me that summer day that in this sense of exuberant life, of conscious, vital power, of spontaneity, of freedom, lay the secret of Ely's chief glory when considered from an artistic or æsthetic standpoint. The great west tower is absolutely unique. Castellated, battlemented, it is, perhaps, all the more imposing because it stands alone, flanked by its turreted southern wing — the southwest transept. The comparatively low, broad octagon contrasts powerfully, yet harmo-

niously, with the superb height of the solitary tower.

In such a presence it seems obtrusive, almost sacrilegious, to use the nomenclature of the schools, and prate about styles and periods of architecture. Why must we always tear the petals from the rose to see how it is made? Yet it cannot be denied that the pleasure of a cathedral pilgrimage is greatly enhanced by (at least) enough knowledge of those "periods" to enable one to look understandingly; and no cathedral in England affords better opportunities for acquiring that knowledge than does Ely. Within its walls every step in the history of church architecture, from the Conquest to the Reformation, can be studied. From Early Norman to Late Perpendicular, through all the gradations of Transitional, Early English, and Decorated, — all are here.

The church is entered through the Galilee Porch. This was the first time we had

seen a "Galilee," so called, though we found one afterwards at Lincoln, and another at Durham. Of course the question at once arose, why "Galilee"?

Millers answers it thus: "As Galilee, bordering on the Gentiles, was the part of the Holy Land most remote from Jerusalem, so was this part of the building most remote from the sanctuary."

Rather far-fetched, but, on the whole, less so than any other explanation given us there, or elsewhere.

But whatever one chooses to call it, this great, two-storied porch, with its fine arch of entrance divided by a central group of clustered shafts, its triple lancet windows, its arcades, its niches for statues, its pillars of Devonshire marble with Purbeck plinths and capitals, is, according to Professor Parker, "one of the finest porches in the world." Passing through this imposing vestibule, we are beneath the great western tower, where one pauses involuntarily.

Above is the decorated ceiling of the tower itself; to the right, the beautiful southwest transept, with the apsidal chapel of St. Catharine, where eight different periods of Norman work can be distinctly traced; in front of us stretches the long vista of the nave, with its twelve splendid bays, its springing vaulting shafts, and its richly coloured roof, terminating in the noble octagon that is Ely's chief glory. Beyond is the oaken choir screen, with its gates of brass, through and over which the delighted eye takes in the seven bays of the choir with all its wealth of decoration, the reredos magnificent beyond description with alabaster, mosaics, jewels, and sculptured panels; and still farther on, the retro-choir, with its double tiers of long, lancet windows flooding the whole with marvellous light and splendour.

But all the time, whether one seems to be looking north, south, east, or west, the eye turns again and again to the great west

transept and the octagon, impatient of delay. It may well be questioned if, in the whole range of Gothic architecture, anything more strikingly beautiful can be found than the octagon and choir of Ely as seen from the angle of the nave aisles, — whether one looks up into the vast height of the lantern with its sculptured angels, or across the bewildering maze of piers, shafts, windows, and roofs, all glowing with colour, and wrought with tracery as delicate as frostwork.

Any attempt at describing all this is utterly futile; yet bare mention must be made of the two famous doorways, — the Prior's Door and the Monk's Door; the chapels of Bishops Alcock and West; the remains of the monastic buildings; Prior Crawden's chapel (the most curious little place imaginable, yet beautiful exceedingly); and, most touching and suggestive in the midst of all this splendour, a rude Saxon cross which is four hundred years

older than anything else in or about the building. It stands near the Prior's Doorway, in the south aisle of the nave, in memory of Ovinus, the steward of Etheldreda. The inscription has been thus translated, —

"Grant, O God, to Ovin, thy light and rest.
Amen."

The roads between Lincoln, Peterborough, and Ely form a very irregular triangle; Lincoln being about forty miles from Peterborough, and Peterborough about one-third that distance from Ely. Lincoln is in Lincolnshire, Peterborough on the southern border of Northamptonshire, and Ely in Cambridgeshire. Yet all three might be within the limits of one small county in Massachusetts. A mind accustomed to the vast spaces of our own country loses all sense of distance on the

other side of the Atlantic. To the child studying history or geography, England and France seem far apart. But in point of fact when one crosses the Channel, the white cliffs of Albion have not faded out of sight before the low shores of France hang like a faint cloud in the distance. So, too, one has hardly lost sight of the mighty towers of one of these three great cathedrals, before those of another loom up before his wondering eyes.

The existing Cathedral of Peterborough — that which we see to-day — was begun in 1140; Ely in 1083; and Lincoln in 1075. Always the mind goes back to the same question, — How were they built? What manner of men were these old monks who dared so magnificently? Did they count the cost before they began? Did they build wiser than they knew? Or did they see, with far-reaching vision, the end from the beginning?

It is pleasant to dream of them, sitting in

dim chantries or vaulted chapter-house, — groups of tonsured, black-robed men, with maps, charts, and plans before them, gravely discussing ways and means, comparing notes, considering the height of this tower, the depth of that triforium, the spring of this arch, the vast stretch of yonder nave, and all with a regard for minuteness of finish and detail in each "remote and unseen part" of which this day and generation knows nothing. One is sometimes tempted to ask if the one work of the world from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries was not the building of cathedrals? Certainly its work ran in narrower channels in those days. Earth was smaller, and its interests were less varied. The learning, the charity, the hospitality, of that narrower world centred in cloister and chapter-house.

Yet it does not do to assume that they held it all. During that same period how the stately castles lifted their strong turrets on every hill! Think of the pictures that

were painted, the statues that were carved, the tapestry that grew under busy fingers, the desolating wars that were yet so full of splendid pomp and pageantry. It will not do to say that the world in mediæval ages did nothing but build cathedrals; and we must go back to the old question, — How were they built? Whence came the money? When we think of the pother made over the building of one small church in our day, of the expedients for raising the needful funds, of the subscription papers, the fairs, and the sewing societies, and then behold these three magnificent cathedrals within a radius of a few square miles, we may well repeat, Whence came the money? Human needs were less, and were more easily satisfied in those remote epochs; human labour was cheaper; human life was held in less repute. But yet — !

We reached Lincoln on a certain Saturday afternoon, and were glad to take our

ease in our inn, write our letters, and talk over our adventures. It was a far cry to the Cathedral, more's the pity; for we had not chosen our hotel wisely. In order to study any one of these great minsters one should be able to run in and out informally as it were; to see it at all hours, by moonlight and starlight, and in the early morning; and it goes without saying that the nearer one's lodgings are the better it is. Sunday found us in the same lazy mood. There was a little church across the way, and thither we went for the late afternoon service.

The next morning was August 1, "Bankers' Holiday." "Not a hap'orth o' business done in all England to-day, mum," the smiling waiter announced as he hovered beneficently about the breakfast-table. "A great 'oliday, mum."

Notwithstanding which fact, or perhaps by reason of it, it proved to be a good day for seeing Lincoln Cathedral.

Peterborough stands on low ground, and makes but an unimportant feature in the landscape. Ely stands on what the guide-books are pleased to call a "slight eminence," so slight, indeed, as to be imperceptible to the ordinary observer. But Lincoln on its "sovereign hill" is like the city that cannot be hid. For grandeur of situation it yields the palm to Durham alone. It can be seen from all points, dominating the whole landscape; and as one climbs the steep "New Road," so called, its stately towers are in full view long before they are reached.

We will approach it, however, by the more direct "High Street"; and leaving our carriage at the Exchequer Gate, — a lofty, three-storied gate-house, which was once a part of the fortifications of the city, — enter the Minster Yard.

The Cathedral of Lincoln does not, like most of its compeers, sit in its own green close, serene and still in a lovely, isolated

repose. Busy streets encompass it, lowlier roofs cluster about it. A narrow border of turf runs along the south side, and to the north and east there is a fair stretch of greensward. But it has nothing to compare with the exquisite setting of Wells, Winchester, and Salisbury, with their long reaches of emerald turf and the stately grandeur of their ancient trees.

The sunshine is very bright this August morning. Clear and penetrating it dispenses with all veiling mists, all softening shadows; and falling broadly, strongly, upon the lofty towers and soaring turrets, it cries to the beholder, "Here are no shams, no disguises. Come and look!"

Three young women who have placed their easels before the Exchequer Gate, obey the summons and look with all their might. An irreverent youth with a red Baedeker under his arm, strolls carelessly about, eating peanuts. Two or three men in clerical, or semi-clerical garb, gaze up

at the five great arches of the west front. As we follow their example, a bell tolls softly and out from the open portal pours the rolling thunder of the organ. The appeal is irresistible, and we "enter in," glad to be just in time for the morning service.

Having said our prayers, we returned to the west front and passed out from the cool dampness of the nave into the clear, searching sunlight again. If there be any cathedral in England that repays closest study, it is this of Lincoln. The façade with its five great recessed arches differing in height, its vast spaces, its flanking turrets, and its tier upon tier of arcades completely covering the huge front, is perhaps imposing and impressive, rather than beautiful. But when Remegius, the first Norman bishop, began to build on this spot "a strong, fair church" in honour of the Virgin, did he dream to what proportions it would grow, and how strong and fair it would at length become? Very little of

his actual work remains to-day; only the severely stern arches of his comparatively small façade, and the beginnings, so to speak, of the western towers. What would one not give if, reimbodied, he could wander with us about the vast pile to-day, and see to what incomparable and majestic loveliness his thought has grown! For whether or no Lincoln bears off the palm for interior beauty, it is certain that its exterior is unsurpassed in grandeur, infinite variety and picturesqueness, and wonderful perfection of detail.

It is undoubtedly true, that as the traveller yields to the magic influence of one after another of these marvellous creations, he is apt to feel as if the latest love was the best and fairest. As his spirit bows to its sway, each in its turn seems to him unspeakably grand and beautiful. Yet I cannot be mistaken in thinking that as one turns to the right, wanders loiteringly round the southwest tower, and then goes

slowly on down the whole stretch of the Cathedral, marking the graceful flying buttresses of the long, receding nave, passing the great south transept with its many-pinnacled Galilee porch projecting on the west, and its circular window, "The Bishop's Eye," peering out from beneath its eyebrow of a gable, — pauses for a moment in the deep, recessed space that separates this from the smaller transept, and then passes on and on, beyond the vestry and the little chapels with their apsidal curves, till he reaches the great southeastern porch flanked by two beautiful chantries, he beholds such unity in variety as can scarcely be found elsewhere. The broken yet marvellously graceful outline, the succession of flying buttresses, the pointed arcades, the exquisite lancet-windows, the turrets and pinnacles soaring from every imaginable point, the enormous central tower, the airy canopies, sometimes empty, sometimes sheltering statues broken and gray with age,

the gargoyles startling in their grotesqueness, — all these, and infinitely more, combine to form a picture that the beholder can never forget.

Shall we go on in search of more beauties? We have only to turn the corner, and before us is the glorious east end, with its deep buttresses, its long arcades, and its noble windows, and the circular or rather polygonal chapter-house, externally, perhaps, the most beautiful in all England. As one looks around and above him during this progress, every insensate stone suffers a sea-change into something rich and strange. It blossoms into unearthly beauty, or it grows grotesque beyond description. Every inch of space is rich in carven work. Even the topmost turrets of the central tower are enriched with fine traceries, delicate and graceful as frost work.

Is the inside of Lincoln Cathedral worthy of this magnificent exterior? I cannot tell; partly, perhaps, because the exterior took my



CHAPTER HOUSE, LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

breath away and left me exhausted. Certainly it was the outside of this magnificent building that made the strongest impression upon two, at least, of its reverent lovers.

Yet within, also, it has its own peculiar glories, the chief being the angel-choir with its strangely beautiful triforium, with its double arches, its clustered columns, its graceful mouldings, its trefoils and quatrefoils, and the hovering angels from which it takes its name.

Lincoln, like Peterborough, has few fine monuments, doubtless owing to the iconoclasts of the Reformation and of Cromwell's time. One hears the same story of deliberate, wanton mutilation from every verger in England; and it is hard to be reconciled to such wholesale, barbarous destruction. But in the chancel is shown a gray slab, the monument of Catharine Swineford, the wife of John of Gaunt; and every mother will pause at the shrine of "Little St. Hugh" in the south choir aisle

—a child who, so the legend says, was crucified by the Jews in 1255.

The "Dean's Eye," in the north transept, looks into that of the "Bishop" in the south. Both are circular windows of great beauty, exquisite in form and colour. The builders of Lincoln seem to have had great faith in watchful eyes; for in addition to these two, there is a grotesque gargoyle perched, I forget just where, which is supposed to represent the "Devil watching over Lincoln."

Tired at last, yet happy beyond words, we left the glorious minster and went along an old street, quaint to the last degree, with high-peaked, red-tiled roofs not unlike those of Nuremberg, till we reached the Newport Arch—an old Roman gateway spanning the street. It stirs the imagination strangely, as, indeed, does the road itself. It is rude and massive, and its two thousand years of living have made little impression on it, save by way of reducing its height. Full

one-third of it is buried under the slow accretions of the years. In its rough crevices grasses and weeds were growing, and here and there tufts of red and yellow flowers glittered in the sunshine.

Not far from the gateway are the ruins of one of the numerous castles of William the Conqueror. Of one thing the traveller may be reasonably sure. If there is a stately, commanding site anywhere about, the chances are that on it he will find a moat, if nothing more, sacred to the memory of the all-powerful Norman. His monuments are omnipresent.

The long day came to an end at last, and it was time for home and rest. How soon the wayfarer learns to call the four walls of his chamber "home"! Thither we went, by way of the very steepest street to which clustered houses ever dared to cling — a street so nearly perpendicular that it seemed madness to look down. Clinging closely to each other, but borne along by

the very force of gravitation, we gave but a single glance at the house of Aaron the Jew, with its richly carved stone portal, as we flew past it. And all the downward way we saw, not the dirty, crowded, poverty-stricken houses, and the swarms of curious children, but the long procession of the early Bishops of Lincoln, climbing this steep and stony way, barefooted, on the day of installation. It must have been easy to be humble for half an hour, when by lifting one's eyes one could behold, against the blue of the sky, the turrets and towers of this fair inheritance.

VI

RIPON AND FOUNTAINS ABBEY

"WHATEVER else you do or leave undone," said one whose advice was well worth considering, "be sure to see Conway Castle, the Foundling Hospital in London, and — Fountains Abbey."

We had seen fair Conway, and the white-capped, scarlet-waistcoated children of the hospital; and now we were on the way from York to the Abbey, Ripon being our objective point. It was near sunset when we reached the station of the quaint little country-town, which is a city by virtue of having a cathedral of its own. For, strictly speaking, as has been said before, a "city" in England means a cathedral town, and that only. Size and importance have nothing to do with it. A hamlet is

a city, if cathedral towers cast their long shadows over it. Neither is a church, however grand, a cathedral by virtue of its dimensions or its architecture. A cathedral may be large or small, imposing or not imposing; but it must be the heart of the diocese, containing the official seat, or throne, of the Bishop.

We were bound for the Unicorn Inn, but the omnibus was already departing, crowded with passengers from an earlier train. It was too pleasant to stay indoors, and while awaiting the return of the 'bus, we strolled up and down the platform, enjoying the fresh, sweet air, and looking about us with interested eyes. Meanwhile a fatherly old porter had possessed himself of our bags and portmanteaux, and we were not quite sure what he meant to do with them. In answer to a meek appeal from Altera, he bundled them all into a barrow and trotted off with them complacently, saying with a brisk nod of his gray head, —

"Never you fret, me leddy. Just folly me and you'll be all right."

This was consoling, and we followed him, as directed, to the other side of the platform, resuming our march up and down while he sat on his barrow and kept guard over us and our belongings. Evidently he had taken us under his own especial wing.

Presently he rushed up to us, his face all aglow with delight. "D'ye see that leddy sittin' in the drag in front?" he said, in a loud whisper which he tried to soften by half covering his mouth with his hand. "That's the marchioness o' Ripon, an' she's a-waitin' for the Markis her husband. Look at her, look!"

We gravely thanked him, seeing only a quiet lady in black, serenely unconscious that she was being forced thus unceremoniously upon the attention of stranger eyes.

Pretty soon our all-observant porter appeared again, touching his cap. "Now," he whispered, "if ye will but watch the

dure, presently ye'll see the Markis hisself a-comin' out. The Markis, ye see, he's been in Injy, an' came home only Friday was a week."

Evidently "the Markis" was a hero. But he appeared presently — a fine-looking, soldierly man with a gray beard — seated himself beside his wife, and they drove off.

The omnibus returned at last, and we reached The Unicorn just as the twilight shades were falling.

Very quaint and old-fashioned is this ancient inn, where, as at Haworth, we found hams and bacon hanging from the dark rafters of the entrance hall. Perhaps the West Riding especially affects this style of mural, or aulic, decoration, which we did not happen to fall upon anywhere else. But be this as it may, The Unicorn is a typical English inn of the old régime, and one of the best of its class, with comfortable rooms, a homelike air, good service, and a fair table.

Doubtless we would not have gone to Ripon, if Ripon had not been the gate to Fountains Abbey. But having done so, we found it had independent interests of its own, and was quite worth visiting on its own behalf. Remarkable earthworks, surrounded by mound and trench, carry the history of the town back to prehistoric ages. Evidences of very early occupation have been found in the shape of arrow-heads, beads, and coarse pottery. Near Studley Hall was once found a fine gold torque, or necklace, buried between two stones; and at no great distance a huge bronze sword which is said to have been destroyed by its superstitious discoverer lest he should be "bewitched" by its possession.

Fragments of tessellated pavements, a Roman vase or two, and some coins dating from Vespasian to Constantine, go to prove the Roman occupation of Ripon. In the seventh century, Alchfrith, Prince of Deira,

was lord of the soil; and he gave to Eata, then Abbot of Melrose, land on which to found a monastery. But the Scottish monks failed to make good their claim, and were succeeded by Wilfrith, now known as St. Wilfrid, a good and learned man who rebuilt the monastery on a grander scale, and made it ever after the object of a peculiar affection.

Danes and Saxons in turn ravaged Ripon. The Northumbrian kings came and went. William the Conqueror bestowed "ye manor of Rippon" on Thomas of Bayeux. In 1319 Robert Bruce, turning his army southward, tarried three days at Ripon, imposing heavy tribute upon its inhabitants, and, so say the chronicles, "perpetrating many atrocities."

The prosperity of the town depended mainly on its woollen manufactures. The country people resorted to its fairs and markets, which, with the presence and

patronage of two great ecclesiastical establishments, must have given it a certain commercial importance and dignity. During the fifteenth century it seems to have escaped entanglement in the desolating wars of York and Lancaster; but what answered in those days for our modern police reports give us curious glimpses into the life of the place. For instance, one Henry Scrotton, "Chaplain at the Minster," is accused of neglecting his duties, of occupying himself in "secular trading, as if he were a layman," and, in addition to this enormity, of mixing sand with the wool he sold to increase its weight! Verily, the adulterators of sugar in this nineteenth century cannot lay claim to much originality.

A certain tailor is charged with disturbing the order of divine service by drawing his dagger upon a rival knight of the shears "in a tumid and pompous manner." A medical man gets into trouble for using abusive language; and one John Clynt is

commanded by the authorities to leave the enticing company of a certain fair widow, "on pain of marrying her."

But police reports, then as now, show only one side of the shield; and it is not to be doubted that the Ripon folk of the fifteenth century were quite as good and respectable as their neighbours.

At length its religious houses, or communities, were dissolved, its woollen manufactures failed, and a "great plague" fell upon poor Ripon, filling up the cup of its misfortunes. Its local leaders joined the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland in the great rising of the North in 1569, which ended most disastrously — so disastrously that, with all the offending serving men of the West Riding, the rebel townsmen of Ripon were put to death before the eyes of their kindred, and in sight of their own homes.

No good and loyal town of England neglects to keep a record of the visits of

its sovereigns. So here we are told that King James I. arrived in Ripon on the evening of Tuesday, April 15, 1617, and "lodged with Mr. George Dawson, in Bondgate." We may be sure that Mistress Dawson and her handmaidens rose early that spring morning; and that buttery and still-room overflowed with preparations for the royal supper. Mr. Recorder Proctor made a speech, and Mr. Mayor presented the King with a gilt bowl and a pair of Ripon spurs, costing five pounds. Right gladly must His Majesty have received the latter, for Ripon spurs were famous. From their fine quality came the proverb "As true steel as Ripon rowels." Ben Jonson says, "Why, there's an angel, if my spurs be not right Rippon." And Davenant, in his "Wits," has this allusion: "Whip me with wire, beaded with rowels of Sharp Rippon Spurs."

A very curious ancient custom still prevails in Ripon; and it is well worth the

visitor's while to listen at nine o'clock in the evening for the three blasts of the wakeman's horn. The "Wakeman," be it known, is none other than the mayor, whose official horn-blower sounds the horn three times before His Honour's door, and once afterwards at the market-cross while the seventh bell of the cathedral is ringing. This horn formerly announced the setting of the watch; whence came the title of the chief official, — "the Wakeman." In fact, the office of wakeman is far older than that of mayor. But in the reign of Elizabeth the borough got into trouble — discord and dissension arising as to the manner of holding the elections. At length, under James I., a new charter of incorporation was granted the town, obtained chiefly by the efforts of a Mr. Hugh Ripley, who was at that time wakeman, and who was nominated by the Crown as first mayor of Ripon. The old title, however, long prevailed. The wakeman and his men were

expected literally to "wake and watch," and if any one was robbed within the town limits, His Honour was held accountable.

For keeping this watch the wakeman received from every householder whose domicile possessed one outside door the heavy annual tax of twopence. Whoever owned a house grand enough to boast of "a gate door and a back door" was required to pay "fourpence by the year of duty."

We did not learn all this that night; for it takes time to make archæological and historical investigations, even if one has little else to do. On the contrary, we went to bed forthwith, and slept the sleep of the justly tired traveller, not even dreaming of the "Marchioness o' Ripon."

We two women, who did not have occasion to put on our overshoes, or to unfold our mackintoshes, from the middle of June to the last of August, can think of England only as a land of blue skies and charming

weather. The next day, as usual, dawned fair as a dream. It was just warm enough for comfort; just cool enough for brisk walking. In short, it was an ideal day for seeing Fountains Abbey; and soon after breakfast we were in a light, open carriage on our way thither.

Passing through the little village of Studley, we soon entered Studley Royal Park and drove up the noble avenue of limes, over a mile in length. I say up, without any regard to the points of compass, there being a slight ascent all the way. At some distance to the right stands the mansion house of the Marquis of Ripon, the owner of the park and of the stately Abbey where one of his name — John of Rippon, was buried in 1435. The park stretches on and on in long and seemingly interminable vistas; and beneath the great trees herds of deer, so tame that they did not so much as lift their antlered heads to look at us, were quietly feeding.

At the end of the avenue stands the beautiful chapel built by Lady Mary Vyner in memory of a son who was killed in Italy by brigands. Here our driver halted unbidden, and forth from a small lodge near by came an old woman with the key. Did the ladies wish to see the church? We had never heard of it before, but we concluded that we did, — much to her apparent satisfaction. So she smilingly unlocked the door and let us in.

The little building is beautiful, merely a nave with aisles and a chancel. The chancel steps, symbolical of Purity, Sin, and Redemption (so said our garrulous guide), are of white, gray, and crimson marble, the gray being intentionally marred and broken. The idea must have been borrowed from Dante, in "Il Purgatorio."

"The lowest stair was marble white — so smooth
And polished that therein my mirrored form
Distinct I saw. The next of hue more dark

Than sablest grain, a rough and singed block
Crack'd lengthwise and across. The third, that lay
Massy above, seem'd porphyry that flamed
Red as the life-blood spouting from a vein."

Canto IX. 85–92.

We did not linger long, for not even this token of a mother's love and sorrow could keep us within, when all out of doors was so enchanting. Looking back over the way we had come, as we delayed a moment on the steps of the chapel, we saw the gray towers of Ripon Cathedral closing the vista in the far distance.

Retracing our steps for a little way, we turned to the left and drove through a long avenue to the Lodge, beyond which no carriages are allowed to pass. And here words fail, and memory and imagination halt. No tongue or pen can fitly describe the beauty that entranced us that morning. Leaving the gates shrouded in luxurious foliage, we chose the shorter way to the

Abbey, down a wide path that followed the windings of the little river Skell. At our left was a closely shaven hedge of laurel, rising far above our heads, through which at short intervals windows had been cut—"peeps" or openings, giving exquisite glimpses of the winding river which ever and anon widens into a wide and shining lake, with its rustic bridges, green, ivy-mantled islands adorned with statues and fountains, temples and columns; and on the opposite shore a graceful octagon tower crowning a wooded hill. Peacocks strutted bravely in the sun, waterfowl dipped and fluttered, stately swans, "with arched necks between their white wings mantling," glided slowly hither and thither.

The walk was not even fatiguing, so bright, so cool, so quiet, was it, with seats in all manner of unexpected places, where we lingered and loitered at will. At length, in the midst of its green and sweet seclusion, we found the glorious Abbey,

remote, silent, deserted. Passing down the entire length of the majestic ruin, with scarce a glance at the great north tower, we reached the ancient gate-house near the west front. And there we paused to look about us.

Details are utterly useless. How grand, how imposing, yet how lovely and exquisite Fountains Abbey is, with its towering, vine-clad columns, its majestic arches, its lofty bays, its traceried windows, its great stretch of double cloisters, its splendid nave, its long, receding aisles, stretching on and on like infinity itself, no mortal tongue can tell. Yet this is the seen and tangible. Beyond this, and more than this, is the unseen which is yet so clearly visible to the eye of the imagination. For here, all open to the sky, with no hint of roof or sheltering wall, lie the mighty foundations of hall and hospitium, chapter-house and refectory, infirmary and prison. Over the magnificent cloisters once stretched the



FOUNTAINS ABBEY.

great dormitories. Here were work-shops and kitchens, and here is a great "building of unknown use," whose very name is forgotten.

Fountains Abbey was founded in 1132 by devout Benedictine monks, who, weary of lax discipline, resolved to adopt the sterner Cistercian rule then becoming famous through the sanctity and enthusiasm of St. Bernard. Richard the Prior (so called), with the Sub-prior and ten monks of St. Mary's in York, came hither to what was then a wild and uncultivated valley, in the depth of winter, living at first in caves and under the shelter of trees. On a little knoll not far from the Hall, still stand a group of yew-trees called the Seven Sisters, said by tradition to have sheltered the monks before the building of the Abbey. One feels inclined to ask whether there is any natural limit to the life of a yew-tree. Methuselahs of the race seem to lift their hoary heads wher-

ever there is an abbey, or even an ancient church, like that at Iffley.

Out of these small beginnings grew by degrees the magnificence that bewilders the senses even now when it is a vast pile of ruins. Cowl and cassock must have grown a-weary of deprivation and poverty, for there is surely no trace of asceticism here. Nothing on earth can be more beautiful in its way than Fountains Abbey and its surroundings. It has had no Scott to immortalize it, as the great magician of the North has immortalized Melrose. If it had, the whole world would be at its feet.

We could have lingered there forever, but the longest, fairest day must wane at last. Returning to the park gates by the longer way on the other bank of the Skell, we stopped again and again to look and marvel. At length, after having lost sight of the Abbey for some time, we ascended a little hill and there caught our last view of it — aptly called the "Surprise" — a won-

derful picture with a foreground of winding river and wooded banks ending in a lovely silhouette of the eastern transept and the north tower. In this transept are the nine altars of John de Carcia, the effect of which must have been singularly like those in the east transept at Durham.

Ripon is very proud of its own pretty little Cathedral. I say "little" without knowing its actual dimensions. Anything would seem small beside the magnificent reaches of Fountains Abbey. But great or small, we gave it hardly more than a passing glance. Our heads and hearts were too full of its overwhelming neighbour.

VII

CHURCH AND FORTRESS

NO doubt Altera and I were not the first to discover that the personal equation is one that must always be taken into the account. We carry ourselves with us wherever we go, with all our limitations and all our weaknesses. It is not always safe to conclude that a poem is not good because you fail to appreciate it; or that a cathedral is not glorious because it moves you less than others have done.

If, for instance, you have been hobnobbing for two exciting days with the three sisters of Haworth; if you have lain awake in a haunted chamber of the Black Bull Inn, hearing, with Charlotte Brontë's ears, the church clock strike the quarter

hours the whole night through; if the quaint Yorkshire village and the lonely moors have taken possession of you, soul and body, — and then, spent and exhausted, you go to York only to find the city in the clutches of a great agricultural fair, and overrun by a motley horde swarming at every corner, crowding every hotel, and taking possession of every inch of the Cathedral, the chances are that you will find the great minster unsatisfactory.

This was our fate. We did not enjoy York, because our time happened to be limited, and circumstances were against us.

"Can I do anything for you, madam?" asked one of the vergers, pausing a moment by the column whereon I leaned disconsolately.

"Yes," I said; "tell me how I can see the minster in a reasonable way. This is only an aggravation."

"I understand, my lady," he answered. "But look! There are three large parties

being severally conducted at this very minute. We seldom have such a crowd."

It was indeed a crowd. All Yorkshire, and half a dozen other shires, apparently, were killing two birds with one stone, — taking in the fair, and "doing" the Cathedral.

"And this will last three days?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Three days and more. And not one in ten know what they are looking at, or care a straw for what they see. But you understand that under the circumstances we must keep the gates locked."

"Yes, I see. Nevertheless, we must have another look at that chapter-house, Altera."

The verger laughed, swinging his keys.

"I will lock you into the chapter-house, if you say so," he said. "You may stay half an hour. I am just leaving; but I will tell one of my associates to let you out."



THE "FIVE SISTERS" YORK MINSTER.

Needless to say, we jumped at his offer. We were standing in the north transept, gazing up at the "Five Sisters," the five exquisite lancet-windows with their double mullions, all silver grays, and tender olives, and sage greens, as soft as moonlight. Passing into the east aisle, we stopped a moment at the tomb of Archbishop Greenfield, and then the wrought iron gate, or door, of the vestibule was opened for us. Near it is this singularly appropriate inscription,

"Ut rosa flos florum, sic est domus ista domorum."

The vestibule itself is more than beautiful; but as to the chapter-house to which it leads, it is perhaps not too much to say that it is indeed "domus domorum." It has no central column, — which is the main, distinguishing feature of most chapter-houses, — is octagonal in form, and each of the eight bays is one great, glorious window, with geometrical tracing.

Altera sank into one of the canopied seats of carven stone that run the circuit of the room, underneath richly coloured windows, and removed her veil with a deep sigh of relief.

"What a chamber of peace!" she cried, "after that gabbling, discordant crowd!"

No sounds reached us. We might have been in the heart of a forest. It was good to be there, on that Mount of Transfiguration.

But all good things must have an end. Our half hour was up; and with many lingering looks we retraced our way through the long, rectangular vestibule to the iron gate.

Not a verger was to be seen, and the north transept was empty. Apparently all the world had gone in pursuit of luncheon. "It seems we are prisoners," I said, beating the bars in vain. "What next?"

We studied the efflorescence, the whorls

and tendrils, of that gate for full another half hour, before we were able to attract the attention of a stray visitor in the distance, and beg him to send some one to our rescue.

A verger (not ours) came, laughing, but with many apologies.

"It is all my fault, ladies," he said, flinging wide the door; "I was told to let you out, but was with a party and forgot all about it. I hope there is no harm done?"

"Not the least," I replied, "provided we have not lost our train. Good morning!"

We went our way; and all I remember of York is the wonderful beauty of its chapter-house, its wealth of stained windows, and the curious stone rood-screen of rich tabernacle-work, with statues of English kings from William the Conqueror to Henry VI., "inclusive," as the catalogues say. Their stony eyes look precisely as if they wore spectacles.

In due time, we took the train for Durham. The country through which we sped was not especially interesting; and a loquacious fellow-traveller, self-conceited and opinionated, did his part towards making the trip disagreeable. We were glad when from the great railroad bridge over the Wear, we saw the walls of "time-honoured Durham," Castle and Cathedral both, rising sheer from the face of the cliff, embowered in dense masses of foliage.

The next day was Sunday. If one is possessed of a spark of imagination to be kindled, or of poetic instinct, — to say nothing of religious feeling, — there is an inexpressible charm about cathedral services. What does it matter if (as often happens, though seldom on Sunday) there seems to be a "beggarly array of empty benches"? To a sensitive nature a cathedral is an embodied prayer. It is prayer incarnate. Every supplication, every litany, every chanted psalm, that has ever gone up

from its altar, seems to hover yet about its time-worn, hallowed walls and vaulted roofs, and to have been absorbed into its very being.

Nevertheless, Altera did the praying for both of us that morning, while I dreamed and mused listlessly in my room, saving my strength for the morrow. In the afternoon we took the "Long Walk" on the banks of the Wear, which is a lovely, fascinating little river. It must be confessed that English lakes and rivers, famed in story and in song, are sometimes disappointing. Or rather, they would be, were it not for the song and the story. The "banks and braes o' Bonny Doon" are beautiful in themselves; but who would care if they were not? Or who would measure Cader Idris, Ben Venue, or Ben Nevis?

The Wear winds and turns and doubles on its track in curves and loops, like a child playing hide-and-seek. In fact, as you follow its densely wooded banks, you

feel as if you were yourself in a game of hide-and-seek with both Cathedral and Castle, which seemed to dodge and elude you, appearing sometimes on your right hand, and the next minute on your left, in most bewildering fashion.

We came out near the Cathedral, having escaped the steep ascent by this circuitous route; and from the bank below the west front were able to see the Galilee Porch to great advantage. Here, on a sheer cliff, lifted high above the river — a cliff up which great forest trees have been slowly clambering for ages — the Cathedral towers aloft, stern, majestic, imposing. To the left, or northward, lies the gray, battlemented castle; to the right are old monastic buildings, now turned to happy, domestic uses, sitting in fair gardens and shadowy groves. Surely no cathedral in England, perhaps none in the world, can rival this proud Durham in the splendour and grandeur of its site. Lincoln, indeed,

sits on its "sovereign hill"; but not in stately isolation. Meaner buildings crowd around it, and press upon its knees. Durham is a king on his throne, lifted high above the multitude, yet stretching out beneficent hands in benediction.

But while we are on the bank beneath it, perhaps this is the best time and place for a word about the western façade. No doubt the west doors at Durham, as elsewhere, were originally the chief entrances — standing far enough back from the cliff to admit of use. But now there are no doors here. For, it must be said, the good St. Cuthbert, who was the founder of Durham, — and of whom more anon, — had a pronounced dislike to women. His shrine was in the place of honour, east of the choir, and behind the high altar. Now if the Lady-Chapel, which is what this great Galilee Porch really is, had been set in the usual position at the east, there is no telling what dire results might not have followed.

In fact, it is a matter of history that about the year 1150 Bishop Pudsey began to build a Lady-Chapel at the east end of the Cathedral. But the attempt was unsuccessful, owing either to the displeasure of God and the saint, — or to the spongy, peaty quality of the soil. Anyhow, there was a shrinkage, and a crumbling of walls, — which was of course ominous; and the good Bishop hastened to remove his fine columns of Purbeck marble, and the heavy bases "from beyond the sea," to the west front, as far as possible from the dust of fastidious St. Cuthbert. After which all seems to have been sweetly serene as well as stable.

But the walls of the Galilee rise sheer from the edge of the cliff, and seem almost a part of it. There are no outside doors, the only entrance to the chapel being directly from the nave.

The next morning we drove up the steep, narrow street leading from the town to the

ancient castle of William the Conqueror, which is now used as a university. One fancies that the sturdy old Norman, who had more reverence for broadswords and chain mail than for books, or parchment scrolls, would cry out, "To what base uses we may return, Horatio!" if he could see the hoary keep as it is now, — a comfortable dormitory for young men. It was the long vacation, and there was no sign of cap or gown. To tell the truth, we were rather glad of it, as we wandered about the grand old fortress, the scene of so many conflicts between Scot and Southron, gazed up at its battlemented towers, and trod its storied courtyard.

The castle is wonderfully well preserved in its still hale old age. It looks — and so does its spiritual sister across the green — as if it might outlive the everlasting hills; and the changes necessary to adapt it to its present uses have been made, for the most part, with skill and care, and a thoughtful

reverence for its past. Of course in this utilitarian age one ought to be glad — and one *is* glad — that this vast mass of ivy-mantled stone should be put to sóme beneficent use. It is well that serene and elegant learning should abide where once "stern-visaged war did rear its awful front." Yet if one has an eye for the picturesque, it must be confessed it is something of a shock to find the "donjon keep" turned into a bedroom, with mattress and spring bed!

In the great dining-hall where the young students now eat, yet hang the heavy balconies where the minstrels tuned their harps, and where, so tradition saith, William Wallace in the disguise of a wandering pilgrim sang and played before some faire ladye of high degree. In this room kings and queens, from the Empress Matilda down to Charles I., have received the homage of loyal hosts. Many of the walls are hung with tapestries wrought by pious nuns in

the old monastic days; and on the great black staircase one seems to see stately, shadowy figures ascending and descending — knight and crusader, prelate, priest, and king.

Near the kitchen we were shown a massive, iron-bound chest, in which it is said St. Cuthbert's body once lay. At the time of the Reformation it was removed here to await the pleasure of Henry VIII.; but was eventually restored to its resting-place. The great saint seems to have been well provided with coffins. He died at Lindesfarne, or Holy Island, A.D. 685. Eleven years afterward the monks, having occasion to remove the body, found it quite unchanged, and made for it a new coffin of carved wood, large fragments of which are still preserved in the Cathedral library. As we stood looking at it, a voice said, —

"It will be twelve hundred years next Thursday since St. Cuthbert died; and on that day there will be a great pilgrimage

to Holy Island." Thus are past and present linked together.

In the crypt of the castle is a small private chapel, built for his own use by the great Norman Conqueror. It was a fit oratory, so rude, so rough, so strong, looking as if some Titan had hewed it from the solid rock.

Presently we heard a great bell, tolling, tolling, tolling, and the peal of an organ. Hurrying across Castle Green, the broad, level space that divides the castle from the Cathedral, we entered the vast, vaulted nave, and found ourselves uninvited guests at a funeral service. Silently and reverently we made our way up the north aisle, and found seats near the choir. "It is one of the Minor Canons," some one whispered. "He died on Friday."

The white-surpliced choir boys were chanting, while the organ breathed softly. Then suddenly a great flood of melody filled all the vaulted spaces, and a grand

voice sang the well-known hymn of Sir John Goss, — "Brother, thou hast left us." Four men lifted the coffin, heaped with flowers, to their shoulders, and the long procession, — deans, canons, priests, choir boys and people, — passed out by the door in the south transept, into the adjoining graveyard. It was most impressive, that funeral pageant, so unexpectedly encountered; and strangers though we were, we breathed more freely when dust was committed to dust.

It is worth something to know that he who has seen Durham has seen the finest specimen of Norman architecture now existing in England, or perhaps in the world; for it is conceded that there is nothing finer, if as fine, on the Continent. But here are no lace-like traceries; here is no exquisite colouring. However much we may have admired and enjoyed these elsewhere, they are not needed here. All is sombre, massive, stately, imposing, blent with such a

solemn, awful beauty that the heart throbs, the throat swells, and the eyes grow dim. The mighty nave with the stone vaulting of its roof, — a marvellous roofing that is a characteristic feature of the whole building; the great circular piers strangely decorated, if one may use the word in this connection, by deep, incised lines in the stone, cut in various patterns, zigzag, lozenge, and deep flutings, in which black shadows brood; the heavy zigzag and dog-tooth mouldings, not unlike those at Iffley; the stately splendour of the choir; the graceful beauty of the "Nine Altars," — an eastern transept taking the place of the apse in which the Norman choir once ended, — all these, with countless details of chantry, tomb, and shrine, that cannot be so much as mentioned here, combine to make an impression too vivid to be ever forgotten.

I have said that St. Cuthbert hated women — or feared their wiles, possibly, — which may be a gentler way of put-

ting it. This feeling seems to have been inherited by his successors, unless to do their master honour they did violence to their own feelings. When the nave of Durham was built, a line of dark Frosterly marble, crossed by two central lines, was let into the stone flagging, just west of the north and south doors. Over this line, in the earlier days, no woman's foot might step. She might not approach sanctuary, or high altar, or kneel at St. Cuthbert's splendid shrine. I doubt if the records tell just when this embargo on womanhood was removed. But one cannot stand beside the spot where his dust unquestionably lies, without a tender thought for the doughty old man whose name has lived so long, the first of the long line of prince-bishops that make the annals of Durham glorious. Of humble parentage, we hear of him first as a shepherd boy tending his flocks not far from Melrose; next as a student, or acolyte, at St. David's; then as a

great evangelist, or missionary, preaching in the wilds of Northumbria. He became bishop, "much against his will," but the people would have him for their spiritual ruler, and he yielded. It is said of him that he possessed "eminent self-control and patience, and great persuasive power," with a deep and tender sympathy that drew all hearts to him, as the moon attracts the sea. His ministration was wise, vigorous, and beneficent. Let womanhood forgive him for the cross in the nave.

St. Cuthbert was first buried at Lindisfarne, where was a monastery, the forerunner of Durham. But the Danes came over the sea, and the monks fled far, carrying with them their treasures. Of these the most sacred was the body of their saint. For years they wandered homeless, settling for short periods, now here, now there. And here comes in one of the strange legends that go to show how widely the life and thought of the tenth century

differed from that of the nineteenth. The story goes that the monks, bearing their ghastly burden ever with them, went searching for a site on which to build a church, which should be likewise a tomb for their bishop. When they reached a place then called Ward Lake, not far from what is now Durham, the coffin was placed upon the ground while they rested. When they would have resumed their journey, lo and behold! their united efforts could not stir it. The saint would not budge an inch. This "wrought great admiration in the hearts of the monks," and *ergo*, they fasted and prayed three days, asking what they should do with the body of holy St. Cuthbert. They were told, how or by whom the chronicle saith not, to carry him to Dunholme. Here was a dilemma. None of them knew where Dunholme was. But let us quote from said old chronicle.

"But see their good fortune! As they were going, a woman that lacked her cow

did call aloud to her companion to know if she did not see her, who answered with a loud voice, that her cow was in Dunholme, a happy and heavenly echo to the distressed monks, who by that means were at the end of their journey, where they should find a resting-place for the body of their honoured saint."

On the north side of the east transept —high up on the outer wall—are the sculptured figures of two milkmaids and a "Dun Cow." Thus we see that, after all, the voice of a woman decided St. Cuthbert's burial place.

The Galilee Porch is an exquisitely beautiful oblong chapel, with five aisles, a bewildering maze of vaults and arches and clustered shafts, all richly decorated with zigzag work. Here rest the ashes of the Venerable Bede, in front of his own altar. Once they were encased in a magnificent shrine of gold and silver, but now only the severely plain, sarcophagus-like tomb

remains. It bears the well-known inscription, —

"Hac sunt in fossa Bedæ venerabilis ossa."

Tradition says, that when the sculptor, or engraver, hesitated for a fitting adjective, an angel appeared, took the graving tool, and wrote the word "venerabilis." History and romance are alike full of such "well-authenticated" marvels.

But after all that has been or ever may be said, of the overwhelming glory of Durham as a church, it is, perhaps, the surpassing splendour of its site, taken in connection with the castle, that makes the strongest and most unique impression. "Half church, half fortress," its early bishops were princes in very deed. They were military rulers, so powerful that kings trembled before them. Indeed, the English kings were well content to let them reign undisturbed in their fair domain if only they could be depended upon to de-

fend the border. There are fabulous tales of their splendour and power, of the stately etiquette of their regal courts, of the magnificence of their retinues. Thomas à Becket was not more powerful or more splendid in the reign of Henry II., than was Anthony Bek in that of Edward I. It was fitting that church and castle should stand side by side, lifting up their awful fronts as defenders alike of the faith and the nation.

Yet Durham had its softer side. If it was a terror to evil-doers, so also was it a refuge, a sanctuary. As one crosses the green from the castle, the eye is caught by a great bronze knocker, — a grotesque head and face with empty eye-sockets. Whether the crystal semblance of an eye once shone therefrom, or whether it was lighted by a lamp within, no mortal can now say. Hunted, pursued, with war-hounds on his track, even if he were robber, murderer, traitor, or defiler, whoever came flying across the green was safe for thirty-seven days if he

but grasped this knocker. Over the north porch can yet be seen the chamber where, year after year, unceasing watch was kept, lest by chance any hunted soul should fly to sanctuary and fail to find speedy entrance. Yet though he fell fainting against the door, if he but touched the bronze knocker he was safe. It is pleasant to think that through these cavernous eyes the light of a friendly lamp may have shone as a beacon in the darkness. At the west end of the south aisle of the nave "was a grate whither the sanctuary men did fly to, when they came for refuge to St. Cuthbert," and where, in addition to this great boon of safety, "they had meat, drink, and bedding, and other necessaries at the house cost and charge, for thirty-seven days."

These same old chroniclers from whom I have quoted, paint for us many a pretty picture, softening the aspect of those war-like days. Around the beautiful cloister

were the dormitories and the refectory, where the monks "slept and lived and ate." In the library, and in small chambers called carrells, they studied. There was a school for novices in the west alley, where they were taught by "one of the oldest monks that was learned." He was called "Master of the Novices," and had "a pretty seat of wainscot, adjoining to the south side of the treasury door."

We were in one of the shadowy passages leading to this same cloister, when we noticed two low arches, precisely alike.

"What *are* they?" said one of us. "Ovens? They remind me of my grandmother's."

As we were holding solemn conference over the "ovens," two men, one of them in clerical dress, approached us from the cloister, and, pausing, asked if they could be of service to us. It is of no consequence what they said as to the arches. But a long and interesting talk followed, — one

never to be forgotten, full of helpful suggestion, and of rich store of information concerning the past and present of the Cathedral.

At length the younger man turned to me suddenly. "Have you happened to see Canon Greenwell's book on Durham Cathedral?" he asked.

I shook my head. "Then allow me to show it to you," he said, and disappeared round the corner.

"There goes the best verger in all England," exclaimed the older man, looking after him. "I verily believe I might say the best in all the world. He knows more of cathedral architecture — I don't speak of Durham only," he added, with a wave of the hand, "but of the whole subject in all its bearings, — than any man of my acquaintance. You may have heard of him? It is Mr. Weatherall."

A bell rang just then, and with a few more cordial words, he bowed his adieux

and departed. Before he was out of sight, the other man returned, bringing the book.

"That is Canon Greenwell," he said, nodding in the direction of the receding figure, "the author of this book. He is a remarkable man. What he does not know about this Cathedral, and about archæology in general, is not worth knowing. You will be glad to have met him, ladies."

And we were. But after a longer chat with Mr. Weatherall, we bade him good-by with an intensified regret that he had not been in service during our stay in Durham.

VIII

THE VALLEY OF DEADLY NIGHTSHADE WHEREIN LIES FURNESS ABBEY

EVEN pilgrims to Mecca and Jerusalem may occasionally turn aside from the beaten highroad to find rest in green pastures and beside still waters. But a leisurely sojourn in the lovely Lake country, rich as it is in natural beauty and literary associations, only served to intensify our longing for ruined abbeys and lofty cathedral arches.

Therefore, taking the coach from Ambleside to Coniston one summer morning, we passed Windermere and Ullswater, and climbed higher and higher among the hills, till the world seemed lying beneath our feet.

The exquisite, lonely beauty of that drive is something never to be forgotten. Swift passing showers, sudden bursts of sunshine, silver mists, and floating clouds lent their enchantments; and once a broad rainbow, wonderful in brilliant colouring, spanned the valley so near us that we seemed encompassed by its glory.

From Coniston, a few miles by rail brought us to Furness Abbey in the Valley of Nightshade, — one of the noblest and most picturesque ruins in England. Not a cathedral, certainly; yet surely in a Cathedral Pilgrimage may be included, now and then, the sacred shrines from which the glory has departed.

At Furness, the exigent, dominant present crowds closely on the past, disputing its right of way. The railroad station is at the very gates. The Abbey Hotel, built from the sacred stones of the old Abbey, stands, as is fitting if it must be there at all, very near the spot where the

Guest Hall once spread wide its hospitable doors; or where it was long supposed to have stood. Later investigation seems to lead to the supposition that it may have been the dwelling of the abbot, with his private chapel in the southeast corner.

But however this may be, the hotel is in the Abbey grounds; and in its various apartments are sculptured stones, — tablets, and corbels, and fantastic gargoyles that tell their own story of ruin and mouldering decay. Over the fireplace of the coffee-room is a crude bas-relief of The Creation, carved on a block of red sandstone by one whose very name is forgotten. The artist chose a thrilling moment. The Creator, in flowing robes, bends over Adam and looks benignantly upon Eve, who is slowly emerging from her husband's side. Trees, some deer, and a few other animals form the background.

But we have only to step from the inn, and we are in the precincts of the church.

Before us is a low, round-arched, Norman doorway, through which we enter the north transept. Shall we stop to talk or even to think of Transitional and Rectilinear "periods," — of Perpendicular, and Lancet, and Geometric? Let us rather give ourselves up to the enchantment of the place, and forget all else. Possibly — though we may doubt this if we choose — the enchantment is all the greater, all the more powerful, because the world is so near us with the clanging of bells, the rush and rumble of passing trains, the strange contrast between these ivy-grown, cloistered ruins, and the stir and bustle of travel and traffic.

The great church is roofless, though the walls form a partial enclosure; and wherever one looks there is a bewildering wealth of broken capitals and fallen columns, fragments of noble pillars, arched doorways, and vaulted windows that are now only wide, lofty, open spaces, shorn of

mullion and tracery, through which the sunshine streams, the soft air flows, and song-birds come and go, building their nests above the reach of harm in these still coverts. The floor of the nave — if there be any floor remaining — is as completely grass-grown as any lawn; a carpet of soft green turf. Everywhere there is a riotous tangle of ivy with its long wreaths and pennants swaying in the wind; and everywhere the slow, pale lichens creep, contrasting vividly with the red sandstone of wall and arch and entablature. The aisles through which the voice of music swept are now marked only by the bases of the fallen columns, alternately round and clustered. Some of them are broken off even with the ground; some are just high enough for comfortable seats; and, now and then, one stands at the height of a man's head. But over them all the tender mosses and lichens have crept, healing wounds and hiding scars, and in

every nook and crevice grasses wave and flowers bloom.

The east window of the chancel is very noble,—a great open space forty-seven feet high and twenty-three wide, robbed now of its "glass of thousand colourings," but most beautiful and impressive in its suggestiveness. Under this window one can yet trace the foundations of the high altar, and the circumambulatory behind it. At the south is the wonderfully beautiful sedilia—of five larger and two smaller canopied niches most elaborately carved, each with its enclosed seat and panelled sides.

Here in the chancel lie in rows the tombstones, effigies and broken slabs that have been found from time to time among the ruins, and placed here for safe keeping. Floriated crosses abound,—the symbol in many cases outlasting the personal inscription. Most of these are illegible, but among the names that can be deciphered

are those of two women. One inscription reads thus: —

"Domina: Xtina: Secunda."

It may have marked the grave of Christiana, wife of Ingelgram de Gynes — or of another Christiana, daughter of Alexander de Bouth, who gave to the Abbey twenty-four acres of land in 1296. Only the recording angel knows which of the twain may claim remembrance here.

On another slab just eleven letters have resisted time and fate: —

". . . Jacet Godith . . ."

This is all that is left of some fair Goditha who was laid to rest — doubtless with prayers and tears — under these solemn arches six centuries ago.

In the choir lies a recumbent knight with the crossed legs of the crusader. If he gave and received fierce blows in the Holy Land, his monument has had harder, if one may judge from its state of dilapidation.

May a suggestion be allowed here? Ground plans of the ruined abbeys can be procured in nearly every instance. By the aid of one, and with some slight exercise of even a not over-vivid imagination, the whole place can be reconstructed. Without such reconstruction one can see, indeed, the pathetic beauty of ruined arches, forsaken courts all open to the sky, and columns ivy-grown and lichen-clad. But he sees little else. With it, he can bring back the whole stately past.

He leaves the church by the round-arched Norman doorway in the south aisle, and finds himself in the ancient cloisters surrounding the quadrilateral cemetery of the monks. There they once lay in stately, silent rows, with their faces to the east, while through the long arcades hard by echoed the measured tread of their white-cowled brethren pacing their daily and nightly rounds. They were still part and parcel of the great Abbey under whose shadow they slept.



FURNESS ABBEY.

Through one of three splendid arches, with their broad, concentric rings, and dog-tooth mouldings, he passes into the vestibule of the great chapter-house, which is always the most important of the monastic buildings, excepting only the church itself. This of Furness must have been exceedingly noble and imposing, its vaulted roof having been supported by double rows of slender, clustered pillars. The windows are many and lofty, and their panelling is superb, the armorial rose repeating itself continually. Over the chapter-house was the scriptorium, or library; and here, year after year, the learned monks of Furness Abbey wrote and thought and studied, and then went their way into the undiscovered country, leaving their illuminated missals and cumbrous tomes behind them. Alas! of all their fine transcriptions, but one book remains on earth to-day. Well might their ashes cry, "Vanitas vanitatis!"

Turning to the south, we find the remains of the fratry, or day room, of the brethren, — a most suggestive place. For here, when they were not working, or praying, or doing penance, they lived. Here their meals were served, and here they met for talk and social intercourse. Above it, as above the west cloister, were the dormitories.

Beyond the small stream that flows through the Valley of Deadly Nightshade, was the infirmary, safely set apart from intrusion, and also from the danger of spreading infection. Surely these old monks were wise in their day and generation. In this quiet place the "seke brethren" of Furness must have found themselves admirably lodged, — their chief apartment having had a large fireplace and four great windows on the south, and two windows and a door on the north.

If one looks long enough, he may find what is supposed to have been a school-

house for the children of the tenantry, or villeins. The Abbey had broad lands and many serfs within its jurisdiction. A stone bench runs round three sides of the schoolroom, and the pedestal of the master's seat still serves to keep order in the ghostly place.

Not far off are the ruins of the old mill; but where is the wheat, and where is the miller? Only the mill-stream remains, as young, as noisy, as vigorous as ever.

There is no need to go into the history of Furness Abbey here. It was founded in 1127, by Stephen, Earl of Moreton, afterwards King of England. Its monks were originally Benedictines, and wore the gray habit; but under the rule, or reign, of its fifth Abbot, they transferred their allegiance to the Cistercian Order, to which they belonged until the dissolution of the Abbey by Henry VIII. Whoever cares to know more of the whys and wherefores, let him consult Mr. Beck's "Annales Furnesienses."

Dissolution meant desolation, and spoliation as well. Yet one wonders unceasingly how, even when these mighty towers and stupendous arches were left to the bats and owls and the winds of heaven, their ruin could have been so complete and overwhelming.

Somewhere I have seen it stated that Furness was second in size to Fountains only. Comparisons are invidious, and may easily be unjust. But when one thinks of size, it is impossible to forget the immense spaces and majestic solitudes of Glastonbury. Perhaps the solitude has something to do with it, and the wide, weird silence as well as the vast length of the church itself. In the grass-grown nave great trees stand now for columns and triforium arches. Yet one can trace the foundations of transepts, choir, and chancel, and go on and on, beyond the steps leading to the high altar, into the empty spaces of the five chapels, the holy shrines, behind it.

Standing here and gazing down the unbroken stretch of six hundred feet to St. Joseph's Chapel at the extreme west, one can only say under one's breath, "How vast, how solemn, how awe-inspiring, is the majestic desolation of Glastonbury!"

Who cares if the Pyramids are older? The time comes at last in the life of created things when to the heart and imagination of man, as to the high gods themselves, a thousand years are as a day.

IX

THE TRANSEPT OF THE MARTYRDOM

DEAN STANLEY speaks of five great landings in English History: the landing of Julius Cæsar, which first revealed us to the civilized world, and the civilized world to us; that of Hengist and Horsa, whence came our Saxon forefathers; that of St. Augustine, which gave us our Latin Christianity; that of William the Conqueror, which gave us our Norman lineage; and the landing of William III., which gave us our free constitution.

We may say "us," as he does; because when these great landmarks were set up, England was our England as truly as she is that of the staunchest Briton who treads her soil to-day.

The third of these landings — that of St. Augustine — was made in the year 597, on the Isle of Thanet, not far from what is now the city of Canterbury. Augustine found the ground somewhat prepared for him. Ethelbert, King of the Saxons, had married Bertha, daughter of Clovis, King of Paris. She was a Christian, like the rest of the French royal family, and brought her chaplain, a French Bishop, with her to England. A little chapel "east of the city," as Bede tells us, was set apart for her use, though her husband and his people were pagans. This chapel stood on the gentle slope now occupied by the Church of St. Martin's, into whose venerable walls were incorporated the Roman bricks and cement of its predecessor.

The great Cathedral of Canterbury is, indeed, the child of little St. Martin's, the oldest Christian church in England. For full twelve hundred years, St. Martin's has been used, as it is to-day, as a parish

church. The font in which King Ethelbert, the first Christian convert, was baptized on the feast of Whitsunday, June 2, 597, is still in use; and I laid my hand upon its sacred rim with a feeling of awe-struck reverence. The view from the west porch of St. Martin's is lovely and inspiring beyond belief. At our feet lie the towers of the great Abbey of St. Augustine, where Christian learning first took root in English soil, and where after so many centuries it still grows and flourishes. Farther on we see the roofs and spires of the town, and still beyond soars the magnificent pile of the Cathedral, as glorious as the noblest temple of ancient Rome. For out of the small beginnings of Augustine and Ethelbert grew by slow gradations, the grandest cathedral in England.

This explains to us why the head of the English Church is Archbishop, — not of London, or York, or Durham, — but of Canterbury. Fuller, in his Church History,

says, "Kent itself is but a corner of England, — and Canterbury is but a corner of that corner. Yet so long as an Archbishop of Canterbury exists, so long as the Church of England exists, Canterbury can never forget that it had the glory of being the first cradle of English Christianity."

It was near the close of a golden Saturday late in July, 1891, that we made our third pilgrimage to Canterbury; and the queer old streets smiled a welcome as we drove to the Fountain Inn, scarcely a stone's throw from Mercery Lane, through which every one of Chaucer's Pilgrims must have passed.

Sunday was a perfect day, — a day after George Herbert's own heart, "so cool, so calm, so bright." What with the devout and simple morning service, and the rest afterwards, it seemed like a foretaste of heaven. But when we awoke the next morning the rain was falling in torrents, and rivers of water were rushing through

the closely paved streets of the quaint old town. We were in dismay; for near as we were to the Cathedral it seemed impossible to get there. After waiting till eleven o'clock in the vain hope of clearing weather, we called for a close carriage and were driven in state down short Mercery Lane and through Christ-Church gate into the Cathedral close. Stopping at the great south porch, we managed to rush under cover before we were really drenched.

Once there, the overpowering grandeur of the stately pile took full possession of us. How long we stood alone near the west door, looking up at the forest of arches over our heads, down the long length of majestic aisles, and at the mighty columns on either hand, there is no need to say. We were armed with the Dean's card, and had his full permission to go wherever we wished, with or without a verger, as we chose. As we knew the way, we chose to go alone. So the gates of choir, aisles, and

chapels were unlocked, and with a bow and smile the friendly verger left us to our own devices.

The rain stood us in good stead. The vast building was empty as a tomb. Slowly we walked up the silent, solitary nave, between the lofty columns standing like rows of sentinels on either side, until we reached the first, or west, transepts, that of the martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket on the north, that of St. Michael's, or the Warrior's, on the south, and ascended the broad, massive flight of steps leading to the choir.

The chief peculiarity of Canterbury, that which sets it apart from all other cathedrals, is the long succession of ascents by which church seems to be piled on church, and temple on temple. Without pausing at that time to look to right or left, at storied pavement or vaulted chapel, we went on through the choir, — which is a great church in itself, indescribably rich

in carvings and decoration, with columns and arches, and traceried windows glorious with the stained glass of the thirteenth century, — into the choir aisles, from which rise other flights of broad stone stairs worn into cavernous hollows by the knees of the myriads of pilgrims who for century after century brought hither their gifts and oblations.

We stood now in Trinity Chapel, with the tessellated pavement at our feet, and beyond it the vacant square, with its border of purple stones, whereon the shrine of St. Thomas once stood. On one side of us is the magnificent tomb of Edward the Black Prince, with his armour and mailed gloves hanging above it; and on the other the marble couch where Henry IV. — Shakespeare's Bolingbroke — and his wife Joan sleep their last sleep. But this was not the end; for beyond the ambulatory with stately chantries all around it, we entered the small circular chapel called

the Corona, or Crown. And standing here at the extreme eastern point of the Cathedral, we had so gone on from height to height, from glory to glory, that we could look *through* Trinity Chapel, *over* the reredos and the high altar, and *through* the great choir with its carven screen, on and on, down the whole length of the majestic nave until our gaze was stopped by the glorious window that was a blaze of colour even on that dark day.

It was a vision of peerless beauty and magnificence, so overpowering indeed that it was a positive relief to turn away from it all, and wander into the chapter-house, guided by the sound of merry voices and subdued laughter. There we found the boys of King's School rehearsing on an impromptu stage, and preparing for a coming exhibition. Boy nature is much the same the world over. These lads were not one whit abashed by their surroundings, but were having just as "good times"

as boys in any country schoolhouse; just as good — and no better.

We went into the library for a moment, and into the Baptistry, a small circular building with a cupola supported by stone pillars, and some beautiful Norman arches. But we could not linger long; for the historic associations of the place, as well as its surpassing grandeur, held us in thrall, and led us back to the transept of the Martyrdom. To stand on the spot where any great event has happened, to see with one's own eyes its locality, its environment, vivifies history as nothing else can. Standing on the very pavement that had been stained with his blood, we tried to comprehend the causes that led to the murder of Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, and to his subsequent canonization.

The man's whole life was a romance, of which his birth was the first chapter. A Saxon Crusader named Gilbert was taken prisoner by the Saracens. A fair Syrian

maiden fell in love with him, and managed to secure his liberation. Whereupon the Crusader, — ingrate that he was, — having had enough of wars and captivity, incontinently sped back to England, leaving his lady-love behind him. But — so runs the legend — she followed him, with a love and trust worthy of a better cause. The fair stranger knew but two English words, — the name of her lover, and that of the city of his birth; but by the repetition of "Gilbert, Gilbert," "London, London," aided by her beauty and her tears, to say nothing of the sale of her jewels, she at length made her way to him over countless leagues of land and sea. It looks very much as if Monsieur Gilbert was a light o' love, and meant that his escape from Syria should put an end to this entanglement. But be that as it may, he was at least man enough to be won by the innocent faith that had followed him so far. She became his wife; and Thomas à Becket was a child of this marriage.

Educated in the schools of Oxford, London, and Paris, the boy grew and throve; and at length in his early manhood made his appearance at the court of Henry II. Becoming at once a favourite with the king, he rose rapidly until in 1158 he was made Lord High Chancellor of England, and preceptor to the young Prince Henry. Fabulous stories are told of his wealth, his splendour, the magnificence of his palace, his costly apparel, his stately equipages. Sent once on an embassy to France, the populace cried out, "How splendid must the King of England be, when this man is only the Chancellor!" He became the most intimate associate, the most familiar friend of the king, the companion of his private hours.

But a storm was brewing between church and state. Each was struggling for the supremacy. Henry and the Barons were on one side, the Primates, backed by the ultramontane power of the Pope, were on

the other. It is easy, even at this far day, to see how Henry must have reasoned. "I will make my friend Thomas à Becket Archbishop of Canterbury and head of the English Church. Devoted to me as he is, he will uphold my power against the power of the clergy. He will sustain the King at all hazards." But "the best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley." Whether it was through some secret grudge against the king, the determination of a proud, ambitious man to shine in a new field, and to be greater and more powerful as Archbishop of Canterbury than he had been as High Chancellor of England, — or whether the man's better nature was aroused, and the spiritual side of him came to the front in the new atmosphere that environed him, no mortal can ever know beyond a peradventure. Certain it is that he completely altered his manner of life. He exchanged the silken robes of the courtier for the hair shirt of the austere prelate; he ate coarse

food, and submitted to severe penances. His brilliant followers were cast off, and instead of doing the king's bidding he became the mighty leader of the hostile party.

This went on for many years, during six of which Becket was in a sort of honourable exile at the court of France. Then there was a pretence at reconciliation, and he returned to England amidst the acclamations of the people. The Cathedral was superb in silken hangings, — glorious as an army with banners. Magnificent banquets were made ready; organs pealed, bells rung, trumpets sounded, and the Archbishop preached in the chapter-house from the text, "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." The truce was an armed truce, however, and proved of short duration. New causes of difficulty sprung up, and the bitter feud grew sharper and sharper. Henry, to strengthen his own position, had caused his young son, Prince Henry, to be

crowned king — not as his successor, but as his colleague, — crowned by the Archbishop of York. This Becket regarded as a direct infringement of his vested rights; for from the time of Augustine until the present, the right of crowning the English sovereigns has been held by the See of Canterbury. Outraged and indignant, he procured from the Pope letters of suspension and excommunication against the three prelates who had taken part in the coronation.

And now it was war to the knife. The King was furious; and in his rage was heard to cry out, "Who will deliver me from the power of this man?"

Four knights held their breath at this, and looked at each other askance. They were Reginald Fitzurse, Hugh de Moreville, William de Tracy, and Richard le Bret. They held quick counsel together and galloped away in the darkness. The next day they arrived at Saltwood Castle,

near Canterbury, then held by Becket's chief enemy, Dan Randolph of Broc.

It was the 29th of December, 1170. Omens and auguries were in the very air. The Archbishop himself was pale and distraught, seeming to be oppressed with a dread of coming evil. Before dawn he astonished the clergy of his bed-chamber by asking whether it would be possible for one to reach Sandwich, the nearest seaport, before daylight. He was answered, "Yes!"

"Then let any one escape who wishes," he said.

He attended mass as usual that day. He went about all his customary duties at the altar, in the chapter-house, at the confessional, in the infirmary, and hospitium. Dinner was over; the concluding hymn, or "grace," was chanted, and Becket had gone to his private room with a few friends.

The outer court was filled with the crowd of beggars who came daily to the palace for the broken meats that were always lavishly

distributed by the servitors. At this moment the four knights, with twelve men-at-arms, dismounted before the house, and finding all doors open strode in without opposition. The Seneschal, or High Steward; William Fitz-Nigel recognized them, — for they were all gentlemen of the court; yet it seems to have been with secret perturbation that he led them into his master's chamber, saying, "My Lord, here are four knights from King Henry wishing to speak with you."

"Let them come in," said Becket quietly.

It must have been a thrilling moment, even for those would-be murderers. They had known Becket in his pride of place in the days of his stately splendour as Chancellor and chief favourite. He was still in the prime of life, tall, majestic, in the full vigour of his strength, with large, piercing eyes that did not waver as he turned slowly from conversation with the monk nearest him, and looked upon his unbidden guests.

A stormy interview followed, in which charges and counter-charges were hurled back and forth by both sides. It is not possible to read the story of that night as it is narrated by a dozen old chronicles without feeling that Thomas à Becket was loyal to the King, while conscientious in his opposition to the King's attitude towards the church. "I will give to the King," he cried, "the things that are the King's; but to God the things that are God's!"

They charged him with the desire to destroy the crown, to take it from the consecrated brow of him who wore it, referring doubtless to young Henry, rather than his father. "Rather than take away his crown, I would give him three or four crowns," answered Becket; and as one of his causes for complaint was that he had not been allowed to crown the young king, there seems to be both reason and justice in the rejoinder. They accused him of treason, and he denied it.

Some feeling of deference, or reverence for the holy precincts, led the knights to leave their swords without, and to cover their coats-of-mail with the long outer cloak of common life. Now raising the battle-cry, they rushed to a great sycamore-tree in the garden, where they threw off their cloaks, girt on their swords, and appeared in full armour. Meanwhile they had closed the gates to cut off communication with the town.

In the palace a hasty council was being held. John of Salisbury besought the Archbishop to be moderate, and submit for the present. "Be ruled by your friends," he entreated, "for these men are only seeking occasion to kill you."

"Be it so," answered Becket; "I am prepared to die."

"But we are not, even if you are," cried Salisbury. "We are not ready to die without cause. We are sinners!"

But the Archbishop's sole reply was, "Let the will of God be done."

Was it obstinacy? the pride that would not yield? Or was it the meek submission of the martyr? God only knows!

Here one of the monks rushed in, panic-stricken, to say that the knights were arming; and almost on the instant the crash of timbers, the fall of a partition, and the loud tumult of assault, announced that deadly peril was close at hand. Most of the monks fled, taking refuge in the crypt and the dim recesses of roof and triforium. Only a small body of faithful friends remained. They entreated him to take refuge in the Cathedral. When he refused, they partly led, partly dragged, him thither through the long cloisters that are so quiet and beautiful to-day. But he resisted with all his might.

Finally, by the argument that it was nearly time for the vesper service, they prevailed upon him — not to hasten his steps — but to proceed in slow and stately procession, with his cross-bearer before him, toward the sacred edifice.

But his friends had but one thought — to reach the church door with their master. Surely he would be safe there! Who would be sacrilegious enough to strike the priest before the altar?

The tumult without increased. The clamour and the clash of arms grew nearer and nearer. They seized him again with frantic eagerness. Some pulled from before, some pushed from behind; and at length they reached the door leading from the cloisters into the lower north transept, where we are now standing — the spot that was to be known henceforth and forever as the Transept of the Martyrdom. Those in advance entered, and the door was barred upon the frightened and excited crowd behind.

There was shouting and clamouring, and fierce beating upon the oaken portal. Then the Archbishop sprang forward in his wrath and flung it wide open, crying out that the church of God was neither fortress nor castle, and should be open to all comers.

Now folding his arms, he waited, leaning against a pillar, while his eyes shot fire in the darkness. Once more his loyal adherents urged him to flee, if only to the high altar; and he did take a few steps towards it. But the knights and their men-at-arms, who had been checked by the closed door, rushed in when it was unexpectedly thrown open by the hand of their victim himself.

One of them cried out, "Where is the traitor?" — and no voice answered.

"Where is the Archbishop?" cried another.

"Here is the Archbishop, and the priest of God, but no traitor, Reginald Fitzurse," responded a ringing voice from out the deepening shadows; and down from the fourth step of the choir stairs Thomas à Becket, in his white rochet, and with a cloak and hood thrown over his shoulders, descended into the fast-darkening transept, and suddenly confronted the men who were thirsting for his blood.



TRANSEPT OF THE MARTYRDOM.

Let us draw the veil here. There was a fierce, tumultuous struggle; there were curses and blows. Then a faint voice cried "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit" — and all was over.

The murderers rushed from the church and through the cloisters to the palace, which they plundered. Meanwhile friends and adherents had fled away; and the great Cathedral was left to the weird, stealthy shadows creeping from pillar to pillar, and the white face of him who had so lately ministered at its altars.

At midnight the weeping monks stole back one by one, lifted the dead body from the pavement where it lay, and bore it up the stairs he had descended to his death, and through the "glorious Choir of Conrad" to the Chancel. There they laid it down; and all night long the ever-burning lamp shone upon the breathless sleeper.

The next day they carried the body silently to the Crypt, — and laid it in a tomb

behind the shrine of the Virgin in the Chapel of Our Lady Undercroft. No mass was said, no audible prayer was breathed. The church had been profaned — desecrated; and from that moment for a full year nor bell was rung nor service chanted. The altars were stripped, the crucifixes veiled, the walls divested of their hangings. All was desolation.

Then legates from Rome came to investigate the causes of the assassination. Popular excitement and indignation reached the highest pitch; and within three years the murdered archbishop was canonized, — the twenty-ninth of December being set apart as the Feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury.

Let us go back to the King. When he heard of the murder, he rolled himself in sackcloth and ashes, and gave way to frantic lamentations, calling God to witness that he was not responsible for the deed that had been done in his name. Passion-

ate in the extreme, and easily wrought up to the display of great fury, it is quite possible that he had never intended, or expected, to be taken literally at his word. But the whole Christian world denounced him; and cries for vengeance reached the ears of the Pope. The terrible fear of excommunication — a fear that the nineteenth century finds it hard to understand — took possession of both king and people. Misfortune after misfortune followed; disasters on sea and land; and with the rebellion of his sons, the path of Henry II. grew darker and steeper.

He had done penance often, but not at Canterbury. Now he resolved to go thither and abase himself at the tomb of him whom he had first loved as a friend, and then hated as an enemy. On penitential diet of bread and water, he started on his pilgrimage, approaching the sacred city by a road over the Surrey hills of which some traces still remain. There, leaping from

his horse, he went on foot along the miry road till he reached the outskirts of the town. There he stripped off his kingly dress, and amidst a wondering crowd who followed his footsteps, barefooted, and with no other covering than a woollen shirt and a coarse cloak, he walked through the streets of the city to the Cathedral. The fierce rain pelted his uncovered head ; the rough stones of the pavement were stained with blood-drops from his feet. He knelt in the porch ; then passed on to the scene of the murder. There he kissed the stones on which the archbishop had fallen, the pillar against which he had leaned, and made his confession. Thence he was led to the crypt, where he knelt long in prayer. Bishop Foliat addressed the bystanders in the King's name, expressing his penitence for the rash words that had unwittingly caused the murder, and his desire to make all possible amends. But before absolution and the kiss of peace were granted, His Majesty

removed his cloak, knelt again at the tomb, and there was scourged by bishop and abbot and eighty monks, receiving three strokes from each. Perhaps one may be pardoned for doubting whether the blows were very severe; but the humiliation may be taken for granted in any case. All night the king remained alone in the crypt, leaning against one of the massive columns, or kneeling at the tomb.

Thus ended the great tragedy. We may not all be able to regard Thomas à Becket as a saint and a martyr, or believe in the miracles attributed to his relics. But he was at least an able, honest, and courageous man; and, there is all reason to believe, conscientious according to the light of his day and generation. For fifty years his body lay in the dim recesses of the crypt. Then it was removed with great pomp and stately ceremonials to the magnificent shrine prepared for it in Trinity Chapel. Magnificent indeed it was, — all ablaze with

gold and encrusted with precious stones, — pearls, sapphires, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. This was in the reign of Henry III. From this time on till that of Henry VIII., an innumerable host of pilgrims knelt before it in wondering awe, offering there their alms and their supplications to the Most High God. The very names of the mighty men of old whose feet and knees helped to wear the hollows in these haunted stones would make a bead-roll that would encompass the earth.

The shrine is there no longer. Its gold has gone to swell the coffers of kings and princes; its jewels adorn the diadems of royal ladies and stately dames. The rapacity of Henry VIII. had quite as much to do with this as had the approaching tread of the Reformation. Absurd as it may seem, on the 24th of April, 1538, Henry issued a summons to a dead man, ordering Thomas à Becket, "Sometime Bishop of Canterbury," to appear in court and an-

swer to the charge of high treason against Henry II., — treason committed, if at all, almost five centuries before! This summons was read by the side of the shrine. Thirty days were allowed for his appearance. When at the expiration of that time the dead man did not stir in his winding-sheet, and neither canopy nor iron clasps gave token of upheaval, the case was formally argued at Westminster, — by the Attorney-General on the part of Henry II., and on the part of the accused by an advocate appointed by the court. For, be it understood, all these queer proceedings were conducted according to due course of law! On the 10th of June, 1538, sentence was pronounced against the dead archbishop; his bones were ordained to be publicly burned, and the costly shrine and other offerings forfeited to the crown. "Hinc illae lachrymae!"

Perhaps it is but fair to say that modern iconoclasts attempt to overthrow this fine

story. But it was believed at the time all over the continent of Europe, and is narrated by the old chroniclers, dates and all, — notably by Sanders, Pollini, and Pope Paul III.

We have lingered long in this northwest transept, enthralled by its countless associations, of which this is but one. Let us go through this narrow doorway, and down this flight of stairs into the crypt — but not alone, for here we need guidance,— and behold its massive columns, carved and foliated, its vast arches, its long, receding, far-reaching vistas. It is dark and sombre now. The accumulating dust and spoil of many centuries have encroached upon the height of the pillars, often completely hiding their enormous bases. But here at the eastern end was once the glorious chapel of Our Lady Undercroft, studded with gold and jewels to a degree that, so the old historians declare, "quite dazzled the eyes with their overpowering splendour."

Even now you can see the empty niche where the silver statue of the Virgin once smiled down upon kneeling worshippers.

It was here, in the chancel of this chapel in the crypt, that Edward the Black Prince wished and expected to be buried. Standing on the very spot, we listened to a long story from the lips of a local antiquarian, — the story of Edward's love for his cousin, the "Fair Maid of Kent," and of the obstacles that came between them. The Pope at length granted them permission to marry, on condition that the Prince should build and endow "a fair Chantry" in the crypt, where two priests should pray for his soul. It has gone to decay, though the foundation of the two altars can still be traced, and the groined vaultings on which were emblazoned his arms and those of his father. But the endowment still holds good, and Canterbury receives the revenue to this day.

"But why was the Prince not buried

here ?" I asked. "Why was he laid up-stairs in Trinity Chapel ?"

The old antiquarian looked at me out of the corners of his eyes. "Why was not Charles Dickens buried where he expected to be, in Rochester ?" he retorted. "Because the people of England demanded for him a grave in Westminster. Just so in this case. The people demanded a nobler burial-place for their idol."

The crypt is full of wonders. Sometimes, if you are a woman, you are tempted to cry, and you wander about with a strange lump in your throat. Sometimes, whether you are man or woman, you are tempted to laugh. Here lies the sculptured effigy, her hands clasped in prayer, of an heiress who, five hundred years ago, laughed and danced, smiled and sighed, like any other maiden. She loved this old crypt, and lavished her fortune upon it. "Look here," said our antiquarian, striking a match and lighting a taper, for there is not much day-

light in those cavernous recesses. "I want to show you something. Look at that young lady's costume!"

I bent over the marble figure, while our guide held the taper near, and saw what seemed the very model of a modern "jersey," buttons and all, and a kilted skirt, lying in long, close pleats from the girdle to the upturned feet.

Vainly we strove to imagine, in that half darkness, what the effect must have been when all the vast spaces were aglow with light from the great chandeliers suspended from the roof, when there was glow and colour everywhere, and the jewelled shrines shone, as Erasmus says, "with a radiance surpassing that of day."

In these storied places one cannot remember, or even take in, everything. So it was with Thomas à Becket and Edward the Black Prince we chose to linger longest. We went up to Trinity Chapel again, and in swift review pageant after pageant passed

before our mental vision. There is much that is mythical in this world, much that must be taken with allowance. But here there was, there could be, no mistake. It is as certain that the hero of Cressy and Poitiers lies in the splendidly sombre tomb before us, as that George Washington is buried at Mount Vernon. There he lies — a grand figure in perfect bronze, wearing armour of chain mail, his head resting on his helmet, the spurs he won at Cressy on his feet, and his hands folded in their last long prayer. High above hang the surcoat, gauntlets, shield, and crest of the Prince. An empty scabbard swings idly. The sword was carried away by Oliver Cromwell, who, however, mercifully forbade his soldiers to mutilate, or disfigure, the bronze effigy. Around the tomb, which was formerly hung with costly tapestry suspended from hooks that still remain, are the ostrich feathers in groups of three, with the famous motto, "I serve," and a word signifying "high



TOMB OF THE BLACK PRINCE.

spirit," which Edward sometimes used as a signature. High spirit, and loyal service! His whole life illustrated the words. A mere boy of sixteen, who kept the lonely vigil of arms but a month ago, he rushes into the thick of the fight at Cressy. With a complexion as fair as the day, and golden hair streaming in the wind, he is a gallant young figure truly, a "shining mark," in the black armour his father has ordered for him. The King sees his great danger but forbears to interfere. "Let the child win his spurs," he cries, "and let the day be his."

Far into the summer night the battle rages; and when it is over, by glare of firelight and torchlight the father embraces the boy in the presence of the whole proud army, saying, "Right royally hast thou borne thyself, my true son, my sweet son. Thou art worthy to wear the crown which shall be thine one day."

Ten years later we behold him at Poitiers,

now a young man of twenty-six, and again splendidly victorious. But with the modesty and chivalric tenderness of a great nature, he extends the utmost courtesy to his fallen foe, King John of France, serving him at table, comforting him with noble praise, and refusing to be seated in his presence.

Two sayings of the Black Prince have come down to us through the centuries, and have become part of our English heritage: "God being my help, I must fight on as best I can;" and again, the battle being inevitable, "God defend the right!"

X

AT LICHFIELD

AS centuries ago the stately towers of Furness Abbey guarded the Valley of Nightshade, so do the three spires of Lichfield Cathedral keep watch and ward to-day over the Field of the Dead Bodies, "Cadaverum Campus." Tradition, countenanced by the great Dr. Johnson himself, says that the town derives its name from the massacre of one thousand Christian converts by pagan Romans under Diocletian. Other authorities allow the one thousand to dwindle to two, and maintain that it was named in memory of two young brothers, sons of a certain king of Mercia, who, having been converted by St. Chad, afterwards suffered martyrdom. If one must believe either legend, it perhaps requires less credulity to credit the latter.

But vague tradition yields to historic certainty when, in 669, St. Chad — or Ceadda — as fourth bishop of the diocese, fixed his seat here, and the town became a cathedral city. He early learned obedience, this patron saint of Lichfield. In 666 he had been consecrated Bishop of Northumbria, by Wini of Winchester. On his entrance upon the work of the bishopric he set himself diligently to the doing of every episcopal duty, walking through his vast diocese after what he fancied was the custom of the apostles, and utterly refusing to ride from place to place. Three years afterward, Theodorus of Canterbury pronounced the consecration of Ceadda faulty in some matter of technic; and, without demur, the latter returned meekly, shorn of his mitre, to the monastery whence he came. Theodorus, however, finding him "a holy man, indefatigable in preaching," thought him material too good to be wasted, and consecrated him again, — this time effectually, —

and to the bishopric of Mercia. Moreover, he attempted to put an end to the walking by ordering the missionary Bishop to provide himself with a good steed, and to use it. How strictly this injunction was followed, it is not for us to say. One can hardly think St. Chad had much need of a horse, or that he had a place within to stable him. Innumerable legends are told of the Hermit-Bishop and his wonderful deeds; of the well-spring, in which he was accustomed to pray naked, and in which he sometimes baptized his converts; of the milk-white doe that fed him in his extremity; of the nightingales that ceased singing lest they should disturb his prayerful meditations; and of the angelic ministrations that soothed his death-pangs. But for none of these is he himself accountable. They sprang up after his death, like weeds in the rich soil of his sanctity. Sainthood has its drawbacks, one must believe, even though it is gravely asserted that a lunatic, sleeping

by chance on St. Chad's tomb, was immediately restored to perfect sanity. The Venerable Bede takes pains to assure the suffering world that if a handful of dust from this sacred grave be mixed with water and given to the sick to drink, they will "presently be eased from their infirmities and restored to health."

But the little early church of St. Chad was only the forerunner of the Cathedral of to-day. It was not even on the same site, but stood at some distance from it, on what is called the Cathedral Pool, a lovely little lake said to be wholly of man's making. It is not easy to believe this, credulous travellers though we may be. But unquestionable authority declares it to be — or to have been originally — only an immense cavity in a ledge of rock, whence stone was quarried centuries ago for the building of the Cathedral. If so, Nature has indeed adopted it. Her streams have fed it, her reeds and rushes and lovely mosses, and all manner

of green growing things have clasped their arms about it. Great trees overhang the brimming banks that are as much Nature's own as if this was some forest lake hidden away in mountain fastnesses.

As for the city itself, no doubt it is infinitely dear and precious to the dwellers therein. But to the passing stranger it is not especially attractive. Or, rather, it is so dominated over by the Cathedral that one cares for little else. One dares even to forget that Dr. Johnson was born here; that from this town he and Garrick went up to London to seek their fortunes; and that the boy Addison must often have trodden the green pleasance of the close. As in so many other instances, the church seems to be the one only reason for the existence of the town. Indeed, it is the town, as far as outsiders are concerned.

But what a fair *raison d'etre* it is! Infinitely lovely, exquisitely beautiful, — these are the words that give colour to one's

thought as memory calls up the semblance of Lichfield. It is one of the smaller cathedrals of England; perhaps it is the very smallest. When one thinks of Winchester, of Canterbury, of Durham, of York, of the glorious trio of Peterborough, Ely, and Lincoln, one finds the whole list of sonorous and imposing adjectives on one's lips. They are majestic, stupendous, magnificent, grand, sombre, and over-powering. They are to one's thought as heroes, bloodstained, perhaps, and armour-clad. They are virile to the last degree. They are strong as Thor, mighty as Odin. They are masculine from base to crown.

Contrasted with these, Lichfield is as a woman — beautiful, noble, dignified, with a heart-appealing loveliness that is essentially a feminine quality. One feels inclined to use the feminine pronoun, and say "she," as we do of the lady moon, or as the sailor does of his ship. Possibly this quality is accentuated by the lithe, slender grace of

the three tall spires that lift themselves in upper air as lightly, as naturally, as do the poplar-trees that grow on the margin of the Pool. Perhaps colour has something to do with it. Most of the cathedral churches are gray, light or dark, as the case may be, but still gray. Lichfield is built of red sandstone, very soft and mellow in tone, and peculiarly exquisite in its setting of green, or when reflected in the still surface of its stretch of shining water.

It is hard to say from which point of approach the Cathedral is loveliest; for while the picture changes with every step, it never changes for the worse. It is in a way isolated, though so near the town; and from whatever direction it is viewed, some new and lovely combination of towers and spires and foliage is continually presented. From the southwest the spires are, perhaps, peculiarly beautiful as seen from the other side of the lake. From the southeast we get our first impression of the great length of the

church — great in proportion to its width and height — and see how much of it lies in the choir and the apse. The church is much longer from the so-called central tower to the extreme east, than from that point to the extreme west; an order of things that is in many, if not in most, cases reversed. But a tape-measure is a very unimportant part of a cathedral pilgrim's outfit. Let him carry a mental camera instead.

Elsewhere, in many a cathedral close, in many a nave, and aisle, and sanctuary, we had seen the ravages of the iconoclasts of the civil war. Everywhere we had heard the same story of puritan spoliation and misrule. Everywhere we had seen the blows of the hammer, the traces of vandal hands in holy places, the profanation of sacred shrines, the wanton destruction of things precious beyond belief. We had shrunk from the tread of horses' hoofs, stabled in the holy of holies; from the

oaths and ribaldry of brutal soldiers as they drained the sacred chalice snatched from the very altar; from the echo of pistol and carbine riddling the majestic and venerated figures, not only of saints and martyrs of whom the world was not worthy, but of the Christ himself. We had wondered over the limitations of human nature — limitations born of prejudice and narrow misconception — that had made it possible for good men and true, men who were conscientious according to their light, to permit in their followers such hideous desecration. But while other cathedrals were shamelessly spoiled, Lichfield became actually a besieged fortress. The city proper was unprotected and open; but Bishop Langton had built a strong wall about the close, and thrown causeways across the pool, or lake, lying between it and the city. To the fortified close and church, then, the royalists fled for refuge, when in 1643 the puritans under Lord Brooke attacked the town.

My lord was a fierce partisan, as well as a zealous puritan. Avowing his determination to destroy the Cathedral, he solemnly addressed his men and prayed God to send them some special token of his approval. But on the second day of the siege, a shot fired from a spire of the Cathedral laid him low. The next day the central spire crashed through the roof, and on the third day of the siege the close surrendered.

Then began a scene of ravage and desecration. From the pulpit in the nave fanatics addressed the soldiery, and urged on the work of destruction. The carved stalls were pulled down, the organ was broken, the beautiful and costly stained windows were shattered into fragments and their tracery wrenched from its fastenings, and the floor of alternate, losenge-shaped blocks of cannel coal and alabaster was torn up. In the tomb of Bishop Scrope, a marauder found a silver chalice and crosier. It was the signal for the spoliation of every other

tomb. The monuments were wantonly mutilated and destroyed, and the ashes of the dead were scattered to the four winds. Sad indeed must the plight of poor Lichfield have been during the long years that followed.

When, twelve months after the Restoration, Bishop John Hacket was consecrated, he found an almost roofless cathedral, filled with the *débris* of the fallen spire and the ruined monuments. He immediately set many teams, "with his own coach horses," at work, put his own strong hand to the plough, and began to bring order out of chaos. The king, Charles II., sent thither "one hundred fair timber trees" from Needwood Forest; Bishop Hacket himself gave thousands of pounds to the good cause, and the prebendaries and canons half their income. But it was eight years before the ravages were repaired and the Cathedral was reconsecrated. Surely now that the storm and stress of civil war were

over, and at least a nominal peace reigned in England, the stoutest Roundhead of them all must have rejoiced at this consummation.

It may be that we felt the exceeding loveliness of Lichfield all the more deeply because it was one of the last cathedrals we studied, and we were able to contrast it with the sterner beauty of its mightier brethren. As one stands in the close, before the west front, he is so enthralled by its grace of outline and general harmony of proportion, that he misses neither the Titanic grandeur of Durham, nor the stately splendour of Canterbury. It is a delight to see a west front in which there are no empty niches, suggestive of ruin and decay. Doubtless the restorations may be — as indeed the learned ones say they are — open to criticism. There are unpleasant stories of Roman cement and other atrocities; and it is easy to say that many of the modern statues are unworthy. But it is the general

effect one must consider. If details may be criticised, yet the façade as a whole is wonderfully beautiful and impressive, with its tier on tier of arcades, and its countless array of patriarchs and prophets, kings and queens, apostles and martyrs. Over the central of the three western doorways sits St. Chad, as is fitting, with a long support of Norman, Mercian, and Saxon kings on either hand. This rather low, broad portal is a recessed porch, very beautiful, with its clustered columns and springing arches, its rich masses of foliage and flowers, and its central shaft supporting the Virgin and child. At the sides are the two Marys, St. Peter, and St. John.

Through this portal we enter; and at once rejoice that the eye, taking in at one swift glance the graceful beauty of the Early Decorated nave with its eight bays, its octagonal piers, many shafted and with rich capitals, its beautiful double-arched triforium, somewhat like that of Westminster,

and the triangular, trefoiled windows of the clerestory, can yet pass on beyond the light, open choir-screen and the exquisite choir itself to the reredos and the high altar, and rest finally on the great windows of the Lady-Chapel, glowing like jewels in the half darkness of the long perspective. The church seems longer than it is, because it is comparatively narrow. Yet three hundred and thirty-six feet is no mean length even when one remembers Winchester and Canterbury.

Beautiful as the nave is, and delightedly as the eye seeks the triforium arches and the rich arcades, it was not there that we two pilgrims lingered longest. The transepts lured us onward with their great Perpendicular windows that have taken the place of the original Early English. The roof is a curious feature, less for what it is than for what it has been. Who would believe, save on good evidence, that an effort was made to palm off wood for stone in the

far-away days of the thirteenth century, when builders are supposed to have believed that "the gods see everywhere"? But in 1243 Henry III. orders that there shall be made "in the King's Chapel at Windsor, a high wooden roof, in the fashion of the new work at Lichfield; so that it may *appear to be stonework*, with good wainscoting and painting." It is needless to say that good honest stone now covers both transepts.

In the north transept is the famous doorway, — a deeply recessed arch, with five principal mouldings. Two of these are enriched with foliage and conventional designs, while the other three have close oval compartments with bas-reliefs of angels, saints, and patriarchs. On each side are detached pillars with rich foliated capitals and dog-tooth mouldings. In the centre of the arch is a fine clustered column, and several full-length figures add grace and dignity to the whole.

In the great piers of the central tower,

four distinct periods can be traced with ease. That of the eastern and western piers is the Early English of 1200. The transepts are later Early English, and join them on the north and south; while the Early Decorated nave reaches them on the west. In the south aisle of the choir, also, the vaulting indicates three periods of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, the east end showing one arching rib, the west end three ribs, and the chancel a close approach to fan tracery.

But this last is a glimpse into the future, for we have not yet passed the choir-screen. This being made wholly of wrought iron, copper, and brass, is exceedingly light, open, and delicate, being a blending of natural and conventional foliage with the most airy of vines and tendrils. Blackberry and grape vines bear fruit of onyx. There are currants and seed-pods of roses in red and white carnelian, and strawberries in ivory. Above this airy display are angels in bronze

playing on musical instruments. Lichfield is especially notable for its fine metal work. The wrought-iron gates of the north and south choir aisles are very beautiful; and no one can fail to notice the perfect grace of the rich tracery that at once protects and embellishes the heavy wood of the outer doors. The pulpit, too, which is in the nave against the northwest tower pier, is a structure of metal, — burnished brass and wrought iron, adorned with Derbyshire spars and brilliant enamels. In the foreground is a group of figures in bronze.

Once within the choir, one is struck by the absence of canopies over the stalls. Open bays into the choir aisles give an air of unusual lightness to the interior, which is very beautiful. But this is nothing to the change in the triforium, which has been suddenly shorn of its double arches with the quatrefoil above, and has become a low arcade, or narrow gallery, — a mere passage-way. Instead of the three stories, so

to speak, of the nave, the clerestory with its vast Perpendicular windows fills the whole vaulted space above the six bays. The effect is superb.

The piers of these bays are so interesting that, without going into any detail of past changes, a few words as to their present condition may not be amiss. The first two from the tower are Early English. The third is half Early English and half Decorated, while all those east of this are entirely Decorated. They are octagonal, with clustered shafts and ornate capitals wrought with foliage.

In the spandrels of the three western arches are niches with richly carved canopies rising to the parapet above, beneath which on brackets of foliage are statues of St. Christopher, St. James, and St. Philip on the south, and on the north, St. Peter, Mary Magdalene, and the Virgin.

On the reredos all the skill and art of the modern ecclesiastical decorator seems to



THE REREDOS, LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL.

have spent itself. Behind the altar is a rich arcade of five gabled compartments; that in the centre, which is lifted high above the others and much more ornate, being surmounted by a cross. The lower part is threefold. In the middle panel is the Ascension, with a group of angels above it, and in the side compartments are the Evangelists and their emblems. Beyond the reredos proper, on either side, are exquisitely light and graceful arcades of alabaster, with angels between each gable blowing trumpets most delicately wrought. Light metal work abounds, with much inlaying of red Derbyshire marble, fluor-spar in blue, white, and yellow, with malachite, carnelian, and lapis lazuli, making a bewildering blaze of colour. Fortunately, or rather, of set purpose, the reredos has been kept rather low, and so skilfully set that it does not greatly obstruct the view into the Lady-Chapel beyond it.

South of the altar is the sedilia, with

richly carved canopies of freestone that were once part of the old rood-screen.

Under the east window of the south aisle of the choir lie Chantrey's "Sleeping Children," by far the most famous — and deservedly so — of his earlier works. In the north aisle is his latest, the kneeling figure of Bishop Ryder. It is almost startlingly life-like; no statue, but the living man in his habit as he walked.

From this rich south aisle one enters — if he has won the good graces of the verger — the treasury, which seems to have served many purposes. Here at one time many a heretic has had reason to bewail his fate, as it was used for a courtroom, or trial chamber. Next to it is the sacristy, over the door of which in the south aisle is the picturesque Watching Gallery. It is a small vaulted space with an open parapet in front. This once, no doubt, served as a watching chamber for the great shrine of St. Chad, and for keeping guard during the

night over the lights burning before the several altars. For Lichfield had chapels, shrines, and altars innumerable, that of St. Chad having had the place of honour behind the high altar.

Leaving the choir at last we find ourselves in the Lady-Chapel. This is a polygonal apse, beautiful beyond description. It is impossible to attempt details, so rich is it in arcades and niches, canopies, springing arches and soaring shafts, parapets of open work, and delicate traceries. Here there are no long-drawn aisles, no intercepting columns, but just one lofty, silent, vaulted space, filled in with nine stained windows of marvellous depth and richness of colour, that soar into the far splendour of the roof and lose themselves there. These windows are the pride of Lichfield. After the siege but little of the original glass remained, and its loss was deeply mourned. But Sir Brooke Boothby — blessed be his name — had seen these ex-

quisite windows in an old abbey of Cistercian nuns in Belgium. After its dissolution in 1802, he bought them, and brought them hither to glorify the cathedral of his love.

The chapter-house is an irregular octagon with a fine central pillar, and an arcade of forty-nine arches. There is a peculiar but beautiful effect of vaulting here that it is not easy to describe. Suffice it to say that the ribbed vaulting seems to descend almost upon the arcade itself. It must be seen to be appreciated. A winding staircase leads to the library above the chapter-house. One of the most interesting relics here is the ancient manuscript known as the Gospels of St. Chad.

One leaves Lichfield Cathedral — when he has strength of will to tear himself away — by the door in the north transept; and if he is wise, he turns back to look again and again, not only at the beautiful doorway itself, but at the whole glorious edifice soaring above him in its supreme loveliness.

Lichfield is the lily among cathedrals, and he who has once seen it may well thank God for the gift of vision, and carry the remembrance with him to his dying day.

Hawthorne said, in reference to Lichfield, "A Gothic cathedral is the only thing in the world that is vast enough and rich enough."

XI

BEAUTIFUL EXETER

OUR second summer in England was over. September was waning, and early October would find us sailing homeward over the sea. And yet — and yet — we had not had one little glimpse of Devonshire, nor had we seen Exeter. This was "most tolerable, and not to be endured." What was to be done? Could we manage, possibly, to spend the next Saturday and Sunday in Exeter, give two or three days to Ilfracombe and the Doone Valley, and, if the fates were unusually propitious, see Clovelly hanging like a bird's nest high up among the cliffs?

It was worth trying for. We packed our portmanteaux and left London by the next

train. Right here, as this last chapter of a small book can be given to Exeter, only, let me take back what I said about a certain street in Lincoln. I had not seen Clovelly then.

And now, as I sit three thousand miles away, under the shadow of my own beautiful, verdure-clad mountains, to record this last memory of golden loiterings in cathedral aisles, I find that my heart is very full. It is hard to say the right and final word.

What is it? Why is it? Whence is it — this enthralling spell? Certainly it is not that one is false to one's traditions, untrue to one's own country. It is not born of any fleeting wish to transplant to our own young, strong, buoyant land the things that so charm us, and grow so inconceivably, so passionately, dear to us in the old world. They would be out of place here in this alien atmosphere; homesick, like Cleopatra's Needle, wasting away for love

of old Nilus and the desert. They do not belong to us, in this infancy of our nation. For they, themselves, were not born in a day. They have grown from age to age by slow accretion; grown calmly, reverently, as the heart of man demanded them. For hundreds of years they have been taking on new grace and dignity. The anthems of the ages have sanctified them; the worship of the ages has floated up from their altars like incense, till the very air is "filled to faintness with perfume," — the frankincense and myrrh of chant and prayer and hymn. We, too, as a nation have our work to do, our burden to lift, our beauty to create, our prayers to pray. We have to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, even as the older nations are working out theirs; and, because of our own salvation, to leave the world richer and the future more glorious still. Had the cathedral-builders of mediæval ages wrought only for their own short-lived

present, all Christendom would be the poorer to-day.

Hoary antiquity and modern civilization, the slumbering past and the wide-awake present, meet and clasp hands in the fair city of Exeter. It is progressive, up to date, full of the beauty and glory — and comfort — of to-day. Yet it is equally full of the magic and glamour of the past. The Rougemont Hotel, *fin de siècle* to the last degree with its showy brick façade and its modern conveniences, is on the same hill with the crumbling ruins of Rougemont Castle, where Shakespeare has embalmed the memory of Richard III. Fine streets, public squares and promenades abound. The famous High Street, which follows the line of the old Roman highway, is at once mediæval and of the nineteenth century. The culminating point of picturesqueness is, perhaps, the old Guildhall, with its projecting upper stories supported by semi-circular arches resting on four massive

granite columns. The colonnade thus formed is superb in effect.

But we had little time to devote to the city, charming as it is; and thought ourselves fortunate in finding pleasant and convenient quarters at the Royal Clarence, on the very borders of the Cathedral close. And in due time, having shaken off the dust of travel, we turned our faces and our thoughts cathedral-ward.

An early Saxon church, called the Church of St. Peter, — of which not a stone remains, — occupied part of the site of the present building. No doubt it was plain and unpretentious, for William Warelwast, the third bishop after the Conquest, began the erection of a Norman edifice that was called in comparison, "marvellous and sumptuous." It was completed by his successor, and seems to have covered about the same ground as the present cathedral. But this Norman church followed in the wake of its Saxon predecessor. Of it,

also, nothing now remains but the transept towers and some fragmentary portions of the lower walls. This was by no means the result of natural decay. It was, rather, evolution. Somewhere about 1230 Bishop Bruere built the chapter-house. Under the succeeding bishops, from 1244 to 1316, a gradual transformation took place which left the church in nearly its present general condition. This church, transformed save as to the Norman nave, was dedicated by Bishop Grandisson in 1328. During this episcopate the nave was rebuilt, and shortly afterward the west front was added. The chapter-house was remodelled in the fifteenth century, and in the first quarter of the sixteenth, Bishop Oldham built the chapels of St. Saviour and St. George.

So much by way of a very brief outline of the early history of Exeter Cathedral. St. Peter, the patron saint of the Saxon conventual church, retained his honourable position in spite of all the changes, but

there seems to be a great dearth of the usual legends, myths, and fables. We hear of no miracles, or wonder-workings, such as cling to the memories of St. Cuthbert and St. Chad.

During the Commonwealth the Cathedral, which had previously been greatly defaced, and had lost most of its stained glass, was cleft in twain by a brick wall separating the nave from the choir. The nave, called "West Peter's," was delivered over to one of Cromwell's chaplains, while another Roundhead presided in the choir, and called it "East Peter's." Meanwhile the chapter-house was a stable, and the palace, the deanery, and the canons' houses were soldiers' barracks. After the Restoration, happily, the disfiguring partition was torn down, and the old order was renewed.

It is not easy to obtain at short range a view of the entire Cathedral that is entirely satisfactory. One must go to the Alphington causeway, or the river-banks, for that.

From these points — as indeed from many that are more distant — it seems to stand on high ground, rising well above the masses of buildings sloping to the river. When near at hand, the south side is completely hidden by the houses that have crept close under its shadow, as well as by the episcopal palace and its gardens. The north close is very beautiful, — green, quiet, set with stately elms, its velvet turf pressing closely up to the confines of the gray stone walls. This close is not set apart solely to the use of the church dignitaries. As I have said, our hotel was on its borders, — perhaps it would be correct to say within them; and there are other dwellings. On one side is a fine old Elizabethan mansion in perfect preservation, with two-storied, overhanging casements, and small window-panes. But how are the mighty fallen! we went there to buy photographs and a guide-book. There is an upper chamber, however, that is gladly shown, — an upper

chamber panelled in rich oak, and rejoicing in a frieze in which may be seen the arms of many a noble house. This was once the famous Exeter club-room, whose walls enshrine memories of Drake, Sidney, and Raleigh, to say nothing of many a lesser light.

Unless one has become familiar with the west front of Exeter through photographs, or minute descriptions, the strongest first impression may be one of surprise, mingled, perhaps, with a slight sense of disappointment. The eye of the cathedral observer has grown accustomed to the flanking western towers that lend their stern dignity to most of the façades; and at a first glance, two pilgrims, at least, were conscious of a distinctly disturbing influence, though it was not easy to say just whence it came. For the west front was very beautiful. There was no denying that. Was it the effect of the two receding stories? A forehead sloping backward does not add to the



West Front, Exeter Cathedral.

dignity of the human face divine. What effect might it not have on the face of a cathedral?

Thus we queried and questioned for a while, and then gave ourselves up to unquestioning enjoyment. It is not well to be too wise. Wisdom is sometimes a great drawback to delight. He who tears the petals that he may count the stamens, sacrifices the beauty and fragrance of the flower to his investigations. Besides, one does not criticise the stars, nor the high mountains; and of such are the cathedrals.

And now, having owned to that first sense of half-disappointment, I feel like taking it all back, as memory recalls that late afternoon of early autumn, with the long, slanting shadows on the greensward, and the golden sunset light gilding tower and pinnacle, and throwing into such strong relief the sculptured screen with its triple row of kings, warriors, saints, and apostles. Time-worn, grim, and battered, they sur-

round the three low doorways as a body-guard. They stand as they have stood for ages, keeping watch and ward over the holy places within.

This is the first story. In the second is the great west window, most beautiful as to its tracery. On either side of the window is a graduated arcade. In the third story, or gable, receding like the second, is a triangular window, above which, in a canopied niche, is the figure of St. Peter.

Such, in brief, is the west front. Murray says that in all the statues the arrangement of the hair, the fashion of the crowns, and the armour of the knights, indicate the time of Richard II., when the work was probably completed. Above the screen, the recession of the second story leaves a battlemented platform, or balcony, that may have been for the use of the minstrels and musicians.

The three west doorways are enriched by carvings and mouldings of great beauty.

At the right of the central door is the *Chantry of St. Radegunde*, built by Bishop Grandisson for his own burial-place. He was, in fact, buried here, but his tomb was desecrated, and his ashes were scattered, no man knows whither.

Before we enter the nave, shall we walk round the great Cathedral, and mark the bulwarks thereof?

From the north close we get our first unobstructed view of its entire length from front to Lady-Chapel, with its great transeptal Norman towers, its long, unbroken stretch of roof, its flying buttresses, and the fine north porch. There is no central tower and no spire; but the vast array of slender turrets and pinnacles, reminding one, in remote fashion, of the Frauen-Kirche of Nuremberg, completely do away with any suggestion of undue heaviness. The rear view from the southeast has the Bishop's Palace and its picturesque surroundings for a foreground, and makes a lovely pict-

ure, even if one loses much of the church itself. But it is to the northeast that we return again and again, with ever increasing delight.

At length we cross the threshold for our first knowledge of the vast, dim splendour of the interior. Immensity is the first word that occurs to one, and yet the view is cut off by the heavy stone choir-screen and the organ above it. But over and beyond all obstructions, the stately roof, springing from richly bossed vaulting-shafts of exceeding grace and lightness, stretches on and on without break to the east end of the great choir, in a long perspective that holds the eye entranced.

Looking near at hand, we find a wondrous wealth of detail. Clustered columns of Purbeck marble divide the nave into seven bays. The corbels of the pier arches supporting the vaulting-shafts are wrought in the most intricate and graceful designs of leaf and bud and flower, long

sprays of foliage, and gnarled and twisted branches, alternating with angels, saints, and prophets.

The minstrel's gallery, above the northern central bay, is large and imposing, having twelve niches, each sheltering a winged angel, and each angel playing on a different instrument of music. The two heads on the corbels beneath are supposed to represent Edward III. and his queen, Philippa. The two so-called nuns' galleries in the transepts are peculiar, and will not easily be overlooked or forgotten.

The windows, not only of the nave, but, if I am not mistaken, of the whole building, are of the best order of Geometric, Decorated, with wonderfully beautiful and effective tracery. One notices here especially the bilateral symmetry that prevails. It is not only that aisle answers to aisle and column to column, nor that the two great transepts are exactly alike. But all over the Cathedral, window re-

sponds to window, screen to screen, tomb to tomb, chantry to chantry. This uniformity might be supposed to lead to satiety. But it does not. Here it seems to serve the interests of harmony only.

There is a jewelled reredos, there is a graceful sedilia, there are tombs and chapels and chantries innumerable. The Bishop's throne lifts its splendid carvings high in air, with almost the grace and lightness of the "foamy sheaf of fountains" in the church of St. Lawrence. A staircase from the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene leads to the roof of the choir aisles and the ambulatory. From the first of these, between the flying buttresses, the eye can follow the long perspective of the roof; and from the other, one gets a glimpse of the great window in the choir. From the clerestory windows one looks down into the nave, with all its lovely arches and light shafting.

But why go on with the inventory? More keenly, perhaps, at Exeter than in

many another famous cathedral equally grand and beautiful, does the observer feel the utter inadequacy of words. There is here such a wealth of detail, such beauty and intricacy of wrought work on boss and corbel, base and capital. No two are alike. There is no triforium; and it is not missed, even though one remembers how glorious a feature it has been found elsewhere. Instead is a blind arcade, very deeply recessed, in groups of four arches under each bay of the clerestory.

Having said all this, one has said nothing, — and can only repeat, how great is the impotency of words!

We returned again and again to the fair and stately interior, while we did not cease to rejoice that from our chamber windows we could take in the whole magnificent sweep of the north side, and almost peer into the recesses of the north porch itself.

Late Saturday afternoon the verger asked, "Will you attend morning service?

Come early that I may have room for you in the choir. Canon Blank is to preach, and there will be a crowd."

When in the sweet stillness of that Sunday morning we crossed the green stretch of turf and entered the deeply shadowed portal, we found the nave well filled, and a great throng pressing about the gates of the choir-screen. Our friendly verger, with two assistants, was letting in one group after another, and giving them seats within. We leaned against one of the nearest columns, and waited meekly until our turn came and he beckoned us forward.

The cathedrals of England are not — curiosity shops, so to speak. They are not museums of old relics, odd misereres, quaint gargoyles, curious intricacies of carving, battered tombs, and broken effigies, preserved for the amusement of idle tourists. They are places of worship built at infinite cost in honour of the Most High. The visitor who fails to see them, to think

of them, in this light, fails of all. To "stop over" for an hour, from train to train it may be, to rush through aisle and chapel, cloister and chapter-house,— this is *not* to see a cathedral. We two pilgrims, compelled by the exigencies of travel, did, I confess, see Carlisle, and one or two others, after precisely this unwise fashion. But I have not ventured to speak of them here. How should I dare, when I had not entered the holy of holies? Only he who worships in a cathedral gets even a faint inkling of what it is, of what it is meant to be.

The service of that morning was exquisitely sweet and simple. Some of the doors and windows were open, and the soft rustling of leaves and, now and then, the twitter of some belated bird mingled with chant and prayer and the clear, pure voices of the choir-boys. Then came the sermon. We had never heard of him before; but having heard him, we did not in the least

wonder that there was a crowd when it was known that Canon Blank was to preach.

"For the love of Christ constraineth me," was the text of the powerful discourse that held a great audience spell-bound that morning. Doubtless the surroundings had their effect, — the magnificent old temple, redolent of prayer and praise, the solemn splendour of the ritual, the deep thunder of the organ. These, without question, added to the effect — if by mere force of contrast — when the speaker, a slender, dark-haired man of middle age, paused a moment, with an all-embracing glance from right to left, and said, "My brethren, rites and forms and ceremonies, even creeds themselves, have nothing to do with the religious life except as helps thereto." Then, rising to his full height, while his colour deepened and his voice rang out like a trumpet, he cried, "Earth has grown sick of creeds, considered as such! It will have

the creed interpreted by the Christ-like life, or it will have none of it."

I am not sorry that this Sunday morning service in Exeter is the closing memory of a Cathedral Pilgrimage.

THE END

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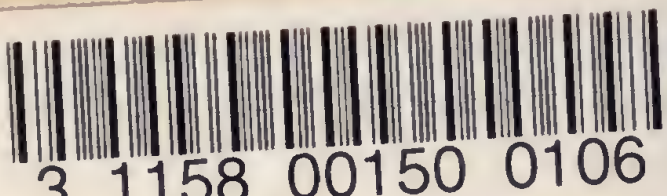
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A CATHEDRAL PILGRIMAGE

BY JULIA C. R. DORR

